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GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON.

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

A Romaunt

By LORD BYRON

EDITED

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

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Editor of Wordsworth's "Prelude," "Select Poems of Burns," "The Shorter Poems of Milton," "From Chaucer to Arnold," etc.

"The audacity and grandeur of Byron must certainly tend toward culture. Everything that is great promotes culture as soon as you are aware of it." — Goethe.

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., Ltd.

1899

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Norwood Press
J. S. Cushing & Co. — Berwick & Smith
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TO

PROFESSOR EDWARD DOWDEN, LITT.D.

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN

IN RECOGNITION OF HIS KINDLY INTEREST

IN THE WORK

OF A FELLOW-TEACHER

Eternal Spirit of the chainless Mind !
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty ! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart —
The heart which love of thee alone can bind ;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd —
To fetters and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon ! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar — for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard ! — May none those marks efface !
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

Sonnet on Chillon.

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Byron has not received the recognition which is his due. The reason for this is that the tragedy of his life has interested us more than the triumph of his art. A careful study of *Childe Harold* as revealing his life on the one hand and his art on the other will do much toward creating that kind of recognition which such an artist deserves. By frequent quotation from his other works, and those of the poets who have contributed to the great revolutionary movement in our century, I have tried to furnish the general reader with sufficient material for understanding the poem, and to place the student in a position of perspective which will naturally lead him to extend his view.

I wish to express my gratitude to the distinguished scholar, critic, and teacher, Professor Edward Dowden of the University of Dublin, not only for generous recognition of my gleanings in the great harvestfield of English literature, but also for kindly permission to associate his name with this masterpiece of a poet of whom he has written with rare insight, magnanimity, and eloquence.

A. J. G.

Brookline, Mass., January 1, 1899.

INTRODUCTION

The history of the world must be interpreted in terms of personality; for it is through the lives of great men that great events are revealed. In the crises of history, — periods of revolt against a low conception of God and man, — from the time of Job and Prometheus, to that of Newman and Arnold, men have arisen whose trumpet notes have been a call to more serious thought and more determined action. They have been misunderstood in proportion as their message was a summons to sacrifice cherished ideas and habitual modes of action; but time, the great revealer of truth, has evolved reverent criticism which on its moral side is a study of conduct, and on its æsthetic a perception of beauty. A right perspective is thus attained by which justice, though late, is done to the past.

In one of these crises we come upon the strange personality we call Byron, by whose ironical laughter on the one hand and imperious disdain on the other, English literature became European; and we are at once challenged for an opinion upon one who presents such marked contrast to some other great leaders of our century, notably Wordsworth and Tennyson.

In his admirable lectures on *The French Revolution and English Literature* delivered at Princeton University in 1897, Professor Dowden said: "To acquire a right feeling for Byron and his poetry is a discipline in equity. It is easy to yield to a sense of his power, to the force and sweep of his genius; it is

march dazzled some with its pageantry, but it aroused the indignation of patriots by its wanton cruelty. When the tyrant was checked at Waterloo, and the Holy Alliance, which promised peace to Europe, followed in the old lines of despotism, terror reigned again in France, Spain, Italy, and the states of Europe. Then a new series of revolutionary movements began, and nations as far removed as England and Greece were lighted up with the flame of patriotism. The old order seemed passing away, and the new had not yet come. In such a political and moral ferment Byron found himself soon after taking his seat in the House of Lords; and, filled with the spirit of unrest, he started on that eventful first visit to Europe, the results of which are given us in the first two cantos of *Childe Harold.* Here is distinctly heard for the first time that cry of freedom which is the central note of all his work.

We are more interested in the merits of Byron's work than in the mystery of his life. The thrill of his work is worth many theories of his life. There are three periods in Byron's work. The first begins in the year 1800 with his "first dash into poetry." Then followed *Juvenilia*, and *Hours of Idleness* in 1806–1807, in which the lyric note is dominant. The reception of these poems by the *Edinburgh Review* caused him to put forth in 1809 *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, in which, with pen dipped in gall, he attacked the creators and the critics alike. It is the most inhuman satire in the language. Elze says, "Pope and Byron each stood on the summit of Parnassus, and with the weapons of his satire hurled down all aspirants from that height." In this period he began *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* during his visit to the Continent. His second period begins with his return to London in 1811. He now published Cantos I. and II. of *Childe Harold*, the verse romances, and *Hebrew Melodies.* Here was continued the note of revolt. Professor

Dowden says: "It is a cry for freedom, — freedom from the tottering tyrannies of the time, from the tottering creeds, from discredited traditions, from the hypocrisies of vulgar respectability, from cavil and sham." At a single bound, in *Childe Harold*, he reached the topmost round of the ladder of fame, — a position which he held unchallenged until his death. Only Scott and Burns among English poets received such instantaneous recognition. The world of fashion paid him homage; poets, statesmen, philosophers, sent him most flattering tributes. His door was crowded by the leading men and lovely women of the day. "All this world and the glory of it" were at once offered to this youth. No one was more surprised than the shy, lonely man, who only three years before could find no friend at court to present him to the House of Lords. "I awoke one morning," he says, "and found myself famous." The third period begins with what proved his last leave-taking of England, in 1816. With the strain of the sea in his nature, he exulted at the change from the "burning marl" of crowded streets, —

> "Once more upon the waters, yet once more,
> And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
> That knows her rider. Welcome to the roar!"

He remained in Italy until 1823. It was during these years that he met Shelley, through whom he was induced to study Wordsworth. The memorial of this friendship is Shelley's *Julian and Maddalo*, in which we have a glimpse of the Byron of this time.

> "But pride
> Made my companion take the darker side.
> The sense that he was greater than his kind
> Had struck, methinks, his eagle spirit blind
> By gazing on its own exceeding light."

The works of this period are sketches and dramas, but the greatest of all were the last cantos of *Childe Harold* and *Don*

Juan. In the last of these he begins a new style, the disdain, cynicism, and audacity of which in revolt against conventional social morality, politics, and religion, become bitterly savage, and yet the descriptive and lyrical elements are full of tenderness and pathos, the expression of —

> "The love of higher things and better days;
> Th' unbounded hope, and heavenly ignorance
> Of what is call'd the world and the world's ways."

Witness amid the vulgarity of Don Juan these verses: —

> "'Tis sweet to hear
> At midnight on the blue and moonlit deep
> The song and oar of Adria's gondolier,
> By distance mellow'd, o'er the waters sweep;
> 'Tis sweet to see the evening star appear;
> 'Tis sweet to listen as the night winds creep
> From leaf to leaf; 'tis sweet to view on high
> The rainbow, based on ocean, span the sky.
>
> 'Tis sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark
> Bay deep-mouth'd welcome as we draw near home;
> 'Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark
> Our coming and look brighter when we come;
> 'Tis sweet to be awaken'd by the lark,
> Or lull'd by falling water; sweet the hum
> Of bees, the voice of girls, the song of birds,
> The lisp of children, and their earliest words."

At this time Greece had fallen upon evil days and the romantic struggle was drawing near its end; English sympathizers raised funds and wishing to associate some distinguished name with the enterprise, none seemed more suitable there than that of the poet whose cry had been freedom from tyranny of every kind. An incident of his school-days at Harrow shows how truly the child was father of the man. When a big fellow claimed the right to fag his little friend Peel, and, finding him

not very obedient, began to beat him in the inner forearm, which he had twisted round to make it more sensitive, Byron, too small to fight the rascal, came up "blushing with rage" and asked how many stripes were to be given, as he would "take half." This was his attitude toward tyranny throughout life, and his willingness to "take half" of the punishment. Byron set out for Greece on July 14, 1823. He was appointed to a command in the army against Lepanto. On the morning of his twenty-second birthday he wrote, —

> "Seek out — less often sought than found —
> A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
> Then look around, and choose thy ground,
> And take thy rest."

He died of fever at Missolonghi the 19th of April, 1824.

The forces in English life and literature which anticipated the Revolution were many. In literature the work of Cowper and Crabbe, in denunciation of luxury and the vices resulting from inequality and oppression of the poor, in raising the standard of human brotherhood and preaching the gospel of service, had unconsciously prepared the way for reform. The period of actual Revolution is best represented by Wordsworth and Coleridge, and that of renewed activity by Byron and Shelley. The typical poems of the three periods respectively are Cowper's *Task*, Wordsworth's *Prelude*, and Byron's *Childe Harold*. In the same period as *Childe Harold* should be included Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. It is worth our while to compare Wordsworth and Byron, inasmuch as each maintained very decided opinions in regard to the other, each espoused political and religious liberty, each loved man and nature, and each became the centre of a distinct literary movement. The contrasts between these men are striking, for, although they had in common elements of sincerity and strength, one was a democrat, cared not for the applause of the crowd, deliberately chose a life

of quiet, was impassioned in contemplation, strove to idealize the real, preached a gospel of hope, was happy in domestic life, rich in friends, and gained recognition slowly in the face of the most determined opposition; the other was an aristocrat, lived for applause, chose a life of violent unrest, was feverish in passionate activity, strove to realize the ideal, preached a gospel of despair, never knew what domestic happiness was, had few friends, and gained popularity instantaneously and unexpectedly.

Wordsworth believed that Byron's work lacked holiness, yet at the time when Byron was being so severely criticised by the *Edinburgh Review*, he said: "The young man will do something if he goes on as he has begun. But these reviews, just because he is a lord, set upon him; they seem to think that nobody may write poetry unless he lives in a garret." Byron in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* alluded to Wordsworth as, —

"That mild apostate from poetic rule;"

and again, —

"Let simple Wordsworth chime his childish verse;"

but after having met Wordsworth at dinner, on being asked how he was impressed, he replied, "Why, to tell the truth, I had but one feeling from the beginning of the visit to the end, and that was *reverence*."

When Byron's star was at its zenith Wordsworth's was only dimly seen on the horizon, where it seemed to be fixed. As time went on Wordsworth gained the ascendency, and Byron was called a cheap sentimentalist and vulgar romancer, "theatrical, worldly, pantomimical." Such was the reaction of a whimsical popular applause. But at the close of the century we do not feel it necessary to hate Byron in order to appreciate Wordsworth, nor to ridicule Wordsworth in order to enjoy Byron. Tastes have become more catholic and criticism more sympathetic. Great men are valued for their power to free us

from our narrow conceptions and arouse us into a sense of the nobility and grandeur of nature and human life.

Byron's works present the tragedy of a Titan struggling against forces of heredity, environment, and will; he was afflicted with the *welt-schmerz*, world-weariness, of a Hamlet; and his utterance was —

"O cursed spite
That ever I was born to set it right!"

We must confess, I think, that Byron did much of his own deliberate choice to render himself unable to "lift himself above himself." This fact is clear and we must not blink it; but, while we know what's done, we know also what's *resisted*: we can judge, but we must pity, such a life. A man who could win the praise of Scott, Goethe, Mazzini, Sainte-Beuve, Arnold, Tennyson, Morley, and Dowden, was surely no charlatan. There can perhaps be no better illustration of the catholicity of one's literary creed than the fact that he admires both Wordsworth and Byron as most of these men do. It is surely better to be of this class than of that of the *Edinburgh Review* which saw no good in either. No eaves-dropping Polonius has yet been able to pluck out the heart of the mystery, of the world sorrow, with which this man was enshrouded, although many have patiently listened and have at times run to the gaping world with the old exclamation, —

"My Lord, I have news to tell you!" but when pressed for light only reply, "Well, well, we know, we could, and if we would," —

Of the subject, method, and spirit of Byron's work, his conception and execution, much has been written even in our own time which is contradictory and bewildering, as when Mr. Henley says, "Byron is the sole English poet bred since Milton to live a master-influence in the world at large;" while Mr. Saintsbury says: "By reading Byron only and putting a strong constraint upon myself, I got nearly into the mood to enjoy him.

But let eye or ear once catch sight or sound of real poetry and the enchantment vanishes." Tennyson said, "Byron is not an artist or a thinker, or a creator in the highest sense, but a strong personality." When such charges are given by judges, is it any wonder that the jury of ordinary readers should fail to agree on a verdict?

In the first place, it is evident that much of the work of one who wrote such a vast amount so rapidly, and who seldom recast a line, must be careless work. Byron says: "I am like a tiger. If I miss the first spring, I go grumbling back to my jungle again; but if I do it, it is crushing." When he *does* it, then we have poetry full of sincerity and strength, burning with passion, and lighted up with flashes of imaginative insight in which events and actions, exalted by robust enthusiasm for the great, the beautiful, and heroic in history and human life, live forever as a precious possession; it promotes culture, for everything great promotes culture as soon as you are aware of it. This is sufficient to establish his claim to a great poet, and yet no one presents more marked contrasts between his best and his worst. He cannot hold himself to painstaking work as a great artist like Tennyson does. His imagination is only occasionally of the first order; his verse is often halting and rude, his ordering of events mechanical, and his purposes lacking in ethical significance. This last defect was partly due to the times, in reaction against the fine phrases, polished emptiness, and subtle theories of conduct of the last century. What Sir Henry Taylor says of much of Byron's work, in his Preface to *Philip Van Artevelde*, is to the point: "There is apparent in his poetry a working and moulding spirit, with a want of material to work up, — a great command of language with a want of any views or reflections, which, if unembellished by imagery or unassociated with passionate feelings, it would be very much worth while to express." His strength lies in his tremendous personal will, in power to conceive single events and incidents mostly

historical, to make them vivid, to fill them with that indescribable charm, that fine perception, which moves the reader. Such work is not the rule with Byron, and could not be with one who wrote much in haste, while undressing after coming home from balls and masquerades; but it is to be found scattered here and there at intervals, and is sufficient to give distinction. With this is a fine feeling for Nature, not in way of interpretation of her secrets, to be sure, but in that of deep feeling and accurate and sensitive observation. Many of his tales are steeped in a balmy Eastern atmosphere; while the dramas are full of natural magic, — lurid with the storm, and magnificent with the majesty of sea and mountain. Here at least Byron bowed in reverence to the Infinite as power, if not as goodness. Here he does something to keep the soul alive, if not to save it. We must believe that much of this reverence he gained from his love of the Hebrew poets, for he says, "I am a great reader and admirer of those books, and had read them through and through before I was eight years old; that is to say, the Old Testament." His love of Nature came from very early associations and impressions, and contributed much which in his poetry makes for mental health, power, and pleasure. In *The Island*, alluding to his Scotch parentage and the influence in the "land of mountain and of flood," mingling with those of later life, he says: —

> "The infant rapture still survived the boy,
> And Loch-na-gair with Ida looked on Troy,
> Mixed Celtic memories with Phrygian Mount,
> And Highland linns with Castalie's clear fount."

That Byron knew himself and his instinct for man and nature, is splendidly revealed in these lines: —

> "I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
> From these our interviews, in which I steal
> From all I may be, or have been before,

To mingle with the universe and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal."

Although he early passed from distinctly lyrical work to that of other types, yet we must not overlook his music of passion and pathos. While his lyrics lack the freshness and spontaneity of Burns, the delicacy and refinement of Tennyson, the flush and glow of Shelley, and the repose and purity of Wordsworth, — owing perhaps to his devotion to Pope, whom he regarded as the "greatest name in poetry," — yet they flash with splendor of action, thrill with passionate regret, and palpitate with piercing pathos. As early as 1816 he wrote: —

"Oh! how I hate the nerveless frigid song,
The ceaseless echo of the rhyming throng,
Whose labour'd lines in chilling numbers flow,
To paint a pang the author ne'er can know."

Professor Nichol says: "He set the 'anguish, doubts, and desire,' the whole chaos of his age, to a music whose thunder roll seems to have inspired the opera *Lohengrin* — a music not designed to satisfy the 'budge doctors of the stoic fur,' but which will continue to arouse and delight the sons and daughters of men."

Byron's subjects are natural ones for the age and the man. The age had grown sated with the sterile wit of the professional moralists and wanted life in earnest, though it was not over-nice as to the quality of that life. Byron was born for revolt against shams of all kinds, and we should not be surprised that every hero in his works bears upon his shoulder the hammer of Thor.

"The giant on the mountain stands,
His blood-red tresses deep'ning in the sun,
With death-shot glowing in his fiery hands,
And eye that scorcheth all it glows upon."

Each hero is the impersonation and idealization of a noble passion determined to put down phantoms of hypocrisy and traditional formulæ. Here we find the old Berserker spirit giving birth to the genius of Romance. There is burning indignation and withering scorn of "the society of worldlings and hypocrites which has helped to make him a mocker and a sceptic." In *Hours of Idleness* he sang:—

"I would I were a careless child,
Still dwelling in my Highland cave,
Or roaming through the dusky wild,
Or bounding o'er the dark blue wave;
The cumbrous pomp of Saxon pride
Accords not with the freeborn soul,
Which loves the mountain's craggy side,
And seeks the rocks where billows roll."

In his various characters Byron "wears the mask of an actor in old Greek tragedy, set to one monotonous, terrible, or sorrowful expression." We may regret that he was not a better man and a more careful artist, but the fact remains that he was a great poet who exerted an influence on the literature of Europe second to no English writer except Shakespeare. Through the impact of his vigorous personality, the brilliancy of his eloquence, and the splendor of his audacity, he aroused Europe and created the Romantic movement in France, Italy, Germany, and Spain.

No author ever wrote who revealed his inmost soul more clearly, frankly, and sincerely than did this Corsair of modern England. The last act in the life of this unhappy great man was as tragic as the first. Tired of the shams and mummeries, exhausted with burlesque, and depressed with melancholy, he sought refreshment in the struggle for unhappy Greece and found death, a happy relief from pain and struggle. "I know no more beautiful symbol of the future destiny and mission of art," says Mazzini, "than the death of Byron in Greece. The

holy alliance of poetry with the cause of the people, — the union, still so rare, of thought and action, — the grand solidarity of all nations in the conquest of the rights ordained by God for all his children — all that is now the religion and the hope of the party of progress in Europe is gloriously typified in this image."

When the cry "Byron is dead," reached England, it brought consternation to the heart of a Lincolnshire lad who had come under the spell of that mysterious and magic personality, and young Tennyson went out alone and engraved upon the sandstone, "Byron is dead!" and wrote that memorial tribute beginning,

"The hero and the bard is gone."

We read in his *Memoir*, "That was a day when the whole world seemed darkened for me."

Carlyle, who had said many harsh things of Byron, wrote: "Poor Byron! alas, poor Byron! The news of his death came upon my heart like a mass of lead; and the thought of it sends a painful twinge through all my being as if I had lost a brother. O God! that so many souls of mud and clay should fill up their base existence to its utmost bound; and this the noblest spirit of Europe sink before half his course was run."

A later poet bewailing the death of Goethe, Byron, and Wordsworth sings: —

"When Byron's eyes were shut in death,
We bow'd our heads and held our breath.
He taught us little; but our soul
Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.
With shivering heart the strife we saw
Of passion with eternal law;
And yet with reverential awe
We watch'd the fount of fiery life
Which served for that Titanic strife."

Byron knew his own weakness, and the mournful regret of the good abbot over the sins of Manfred may have been his own judgment of himself: —

> "This should have been a noble creature: he
> Hath all the energy which would have made
> A goodly frame of glorious elements,
> Had they been wisely mingled; as it is
> It is an awful chaos — light and darkness,
> And mind and dust, and passions and pure thoughts
> Mixed, and contending without end or order."

The wise words of Mr. Aubrey de Vere on Shelley have equal and especial significance in the case of Byron: "To estimate justly the faults as well as the merits of great minds is a duty which we owe, not only to truth and to ourselves, but to them. It is only when we know what hinderances were opposed to their greatness by the forfeits exacted from their faults that we can know to what that greatness might without such obstacles have amounted. We can but guess what would have been the mature works of such a mind, when that planet-birth had cooled down sufficiently to produce healthy growths. The manhood of human life is still but the boyhood of the Poet; yet how much did he not leave behind in his brief span! . . . Looking on what is past and gone through the serene medium of distance, all petty details vanish from our view, and a few great realities stand above. With the joy of a strong swimmer he flings himself upon the stream of life, and finds himself bleeding on the rock it covers! To say "it was his own fault" is a mode of disposing of the matter rather compendious than satisfactory. For his errors he is answerable to another tribunal than ours. The age which partakes of and fosters such errors, and others more sordid, may find time to remember his sufferings as well."

PREFACE TO THE FIRST AND SECOND CANTOS

THE following poem was written, for the most part, amidst the scenes which it attempts to describe. It was begun in Albania; and the parts relative to Spain and Portugal were composed from the author's observations in those countries. Thus much it may be necessary to state for the correctness of the descriptions. The scenes attempted to be sketched are in Spain, Portugal, Epirus, Acarnania, and Greece. There, for the present, the poem stops; its reception will determine whether the author may venture to conduct his readers to the capital of the East, through Ionia and Phrygia: these two cantos are merely experimental.

A fictitious character is introduced for the sake of giving some connexion to the piece; which, however, makes no pretension to regularity. It has been suggested to me by friends, on whose opinions I set a high value, that in this fictitious character, "Childe Harold," I may incur the suspicion of having intended some real personage: this I beg leave, once for all, to disclaim; Harold is the child of imagination, for the purpose I have stated. In some very trivial particulars, and those merely local, there might be grounds for such a notion; but in the main points, I should hope none whatever.

It is almost superfluous to mention that the appellation "Childe," as "Childe Waters," "Childe Childers," etc., is used as more consonant with the old structure of versification

which I have adopted. The "Good Night," in the beginning of the first canto, was suggested by "Lord Maxwell's Good Night," in the *Border Minstrelsy*, edited by Mr. Scott.

With the different poems which have been published on Spanish subjects, there may be found some slight coincidence in the first part, which treats of the Peninsula, but it can only be casual; as, with the exception of a few concluding stanzas, the whole of this poem was written in the Levant.

The stanza of Spenser, according to one of our most successful poets, admits of every variety. Dr. Beattie makes the following observation: "Not long ago, I began a poem in the style and stanza of Spenser, in which I propose to give full scope to my inclination, and be either droll or pathetic, descriptive or sentimental, tender or satirical, as the humour strikes me; for, if I mistake not, the measure which I have adopted admits equally of all these kinds of composition."[1] Strengthened in my opinion by such authority, and by the example of some in the highest order of Italian poets, I shall make no apology for attempts at similar variations in the following composition; satisfied that if they are unsuccessful, their failure must be in the execution, rather than in the design, sanctioned by the practice of Ariosto, Thomson, and Beattie.[2]

London, February, 1812.

[1] Beattie's Letter to Blacklock, September 22, 1776, in Sir W. Forbes's *Life of Beattie*, Vol. I., p. 89.

[2] Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*, and Beattie's *Minstrel*.

ADDITION TO THE PREFACE

THE following "Addition to the Preface" appeared in a later edition:

"I have now waited till almost all our periodical journals have distributed their usual portion of criticism. To the justice of the generality of their criticisms I have nothing to object: it would ill become me to quarrel with their very slight degree of censure, when, perhaps, if they had been less kind they had been more candid. Returning, therefore, to all and each my best thanks for their liberality, on one point alone shall I venture an observation. Amongst the many objections justly urged to the very indifferent character of the 'vagrant Childe' (whom, notwithstanding many hints to the contrary, I still maintain to be a fictitious personage), it has been stated that, besides the anachronism, he is very *unknightly*, as the times of the Knights were times of Love, Honour, and so forth. Now, it so happens that the good old times, when 'l'amour du bon vieux tems, l'amour antique,' flourished, were the most profligate of all possible centuries. Those who have any doubts on this subject may consult Sainte-Palaye, *passim* and more particularly Vol. II., p. 69.[1] The vows of chivalry were no better kept than any other vows whatsoever; and the songs of the Troubadours were not more decent, and certainly were much less refined, than those of Ovid. The 'Cours d'amour, parlemens d'amour, ou de

[1] *Mémoires sur l'Ancienne Chevalerie*, Paris, 1781.

courtesie et de gentilesse' had much more of love than of courtesy or gentleness. See Roland[1] on the same subject with Sainte-Palaye. Whatever other objection may be urged to that most unamiable personage, Childe Harold, he was so far perfectly knightly in his attributes, — 'No waiter, but a knight templar.'[2] By the by, I fear that Sir Tristrem and Sir Lancelot were no better than they should be, although very poetical personages and true knights 'sans peur,' though not 'sans réproche.' If the story of the institution of the 'Garter' be not a fable, the knights of that order have for several centuries borne the badge of a Countess of Salisbury, of indifferent memory. So much for chivalry. Burke need not have regretted that its days are over, though Marie-Antoinette was quite as chaste as most of those in whose honour lances were shivered, and knights unhorsed.

"Before the days of Bayard, and down to those of Sir Joseph Banks[3] (the most chaste and celebrated of ancient and modern times), few exceptions will be found to this statement; and I fear a little investigation will teach us not to regret these monstrous mummeries of the Middle Ages.

"I now leave 'Childe Harold' to live his day, such as he is; it had been more agreeable, and certainly more easy, to have drawn an amiable character. It had been easy to varnish over his faults, to make him do more and express less; but he never was intended as an example, further than to show that early perversion of mind and morals leads to satiety of past pleasures and disappointment in new ones, and that even the beauties of nature and the stimulus of travel (except ambition, the most powerful of all excitements) are lost on a soul so constituted, or

[1] *Recherches sur les prérogatives des dames chez Gaulois, sur les cours d'amour*, etc., by Rolland d'Erceville, 1788.

[2] Quoted from *The Rovers, or the Double Arrangement*, in *Anti-Jacobin*, 1797.

[3] Sir Joseph Banks, the eminent naturalist.

rather misdirected. Had I proceeded with the poem, this character would have deepened as he drew to the close; for the outline which I once meant to fill up for him was, with some exceptions, the sketch of a modern Timon,[1] perhaps a poetical Zeluco.[2]

"LONDON, 1813."

[1] Timon of Athens. See Shakespeare's play.
[2] The hero of Dr. Moore's romance *Zeluco*.

APPRECIATIONS

"The day will come when Democracy will remember all that it owes to Byron. England too will, I hope, one day remember the mission — so entirely English, yet hitherto overlooked by her — which Byron fulfilled on the Continent; the European *rôle* given by him to English literature, and the appreciation and sympathy for England which he awakened among us. He led the genius of Britain on a pilgrimage through Europe." — Mazzini.

"He was like one of those Greek heroes, — youthful, resplendent, as skilful with the sword as with the lyre, — beloved by a beautiful woman, conqueror alike in sports as in battles, and yet condemned from the cradle by a cruel destiny to the infernal deities. Byron never gained a heart without afflicting it or himself. All the sweetness of his rich fancy turned to bitterness at the presence of reality. . . . Every poet feels that which is called in common language homesickness — the sorrow of exile, the longing after things higher and holier. Every poet is like an exiled angel." — Castelar.

"Never was there seen in such a clear light the birth of a lively thought, the tumult of a great genius, the inner life of a genuine poet, always impassioned, inexhaustibly fertile and creative, in whom suddenly, successively, finished and adorned, bloomed all human emotions and ideas, — sad, gay, lofty, low,

hustling one another, mutually impeded. . . . He may say what he will: willingly or unwillingly we listen to him; let him leap from sublime to burlesque, we leap with him. He has so much wit, so fresh a wit, so sudden, so biting, such a prodigality of knowledge, ideas, images picked up from the four corners of the horizon in heaps and masses, that we are captivated, transported beyond limits; we cannot dream of resisting." — TAINE.

"Everything in Byron's manner, person, and conversation tended to maintain the charm which his genius had flung around him: a countenance exquisitely modelled for the expression of feeling and passion, and exhibiting the remarkable contrast of very dark hair and eyebrows, with light and expressive eyes, . . . the most rapid play of features when engaged in an interesting discussion, so that a brother poet compared them to a beautiful alabaster vase, only seen to perfection when lighted up from within." — SCOTT.

"To us Byron is still a man, young, noble, and unhappy. To our children he will be merely a writer; and their impartial judgment will appoint his place among writers, without regard to his rank or to his private history. That his poetry will undergo a severe sifting, that much of what has been admired by his contemporaries will be rejected as worthless, we have little doubt. But we have as little doubt that, after the closest scrutiny, there will still remain much that can only perish with the English language." — MACAULAY.

"That which helped to secure Byron's instantaneous triumph was his intelligibility, the entire absence of the mystic in him. None of those gleams of secret insight into the depths of nature which fill with enthusiasm the sympathies and understanding, but confuse the crowd, ever flash from the genius

of Byron. . . . There is nothing in his poems which reached that region beyond sight, that darkness round us and within, which it is the highest function of the poet to divine, the highest exercise of the mind to search into, catching such glimpses as our faculties will allow." — MRS. OLIPHANT.

"Byron is a rude mountain-mass, tropically gorgeous, not perfectly symmetrical, a mighty ocean ever and anon bursting through the dikes of our proprieties, and devastating our plains; superficial academic critics will always prefer the dainty finish of men who are lesser poets, though defter craftsmen. Perhaps much of what Byron thought, wrote, and did, was, like his beauty, mutilated; but he was a glorious torso. . . . Of what strange and variously mingled elements was this man formed! the breath of Genius descending from on high upon him, angels and demons, perchance, having also some unguessed concurrence in so vast a personality." — RODEN NOEL.

"Along with Byron's astounding power and passion, he had a strong and deep sense for what is beautiful in nature, and for what is beautiful in human action and suffering. When he warms to his work, when he is inspired, Nature herself seemed to take the pen from him as she took it from Wordsworth, and to write for him as she wrote for Wordsworth, though in a different fashion, with her own penetrating simplicity. Goethe has well observed of Byron, that when he is at his happiest, his representation of things is as easy and real as if he were improvising. It is so; and his verse there exhibits quite another and higher quality from the rhetorical quality." — MATTHEW ARNOLD.

"In spite of a good many surface affectations, which may have cheated the lighter heads, but which may now be easily seen through, and counted off for as much as they are worth,

Byron possessed a bottom of plain sincerity and rational sobriety, which kept him substantially straight, real, and human, and made him a genuine exponent of that universal social movement which we sum up as the Revolution. . . . Nowhere else do we see drawn in such traits that colossal figure, which has haunted Europe these four score years and more, with its new-born passion, its half-controlled will, its constant cry for a multitude of unknown blessings under the single name of Freedom. . . . Though Byron have no place in our own Minster, he assuredly belongs to the band of far-shining men of whom Pericles declared the whole world to be the tomb." — JOHN MORLEY.

"With Byron the last rays of the artificiality which had bound European expression for a century and a half were torn off and flung to the winds. He taught roughly, melodramatically, inconsistently, but he taught a lesson of force and vitality. He was full of technical faults, drynesses, flatnesses; he lack the power to finish; he offended by a hundred careless impertinencies; but his whole being was an altar on which the flame of personal genius flared like a conflagration." — EDMUND GOSSE.

"Byron's cynicism is his testimony to the truth that man must live by faith; his bitterness of spirit means that to move sanely and joyously in a moral void is impossible. At the last moment his nobler self revolted against the baseness not only around him but within him, and it was the champion of Greek liberty who fell asleep at Missolonghi. In his delirium he was mounting a breach. — 'Forward, forward, courage, follow my example.' When calm returned he was heard to murmur; 'Poor Greece! . . . I have given her my time, my means, my health, — and now I give her my life! What could I do more?'" — EDWARD DOWDEN.

TO IANTHE

Not in those climes where I have late been straying,
Though Beauty long hath there been matchless deemed,
Not in those visions to the heart displaying
Forms which it sighs but to have only dreamed,
Hath aught like thee in truth or fancy seemed:
Nor, having seen thee, shall I vainly seek
To paint those charms which varied as they beamed —
To such as see thee not my words were weak;
To those who gaze on thee what language could they speak?

Ah! may'st thou ever be what now thou art,
Nor unbeseem the promise of thy spring,
As fair in form, as warm yet pure in heart,
Love's image upon earth without his wing,
And guileless beyond Hope's imagining!
And surely she who now so fondly rears
Thy youth, in thee, thus hourly brightening,
Beholds the rainbow of her future years,
Before whose heavenly hues all sorrow disappears.

Young Peri° of the West! — 'tis well for me
My years already doubly number thine;
My loveless eye unmoved may gaze on thee,
And safely view thy ripening beauties shine;
Happy, I ne'er shall see them in decline;
Happier, that while all younger hearts shall bleed,
Mine shall escape the doom thine eyes assign
To those whose admiration shall succeed,
But mixed with pangs to Love's even loveliest hours decreed.

Oh! let that eye, which, wild as the Gazelle's,°
Now brightly bold or beautifully shy,
Wins as it wanders, dazzles where it dwells,
Glance o'er this page, nor to my verse deny
That smile for which my breast might vainly sigh,
Could I to thee be ever more than friend:
This much, dear maid, accord; nor question why
To one so young my strain I would commend,
But bid me with my wreath one matchless lily blend.

Such is thy name with this my verse entwined;
And long as kinder eyes a look shall cast
On Harold's page, Ianthe's here enshrined
Shall thus be first beheld, forgotten last:
My days once numbered, should this homage past
Attract thy fairy fingers near the lyre
Of him who hailed thee, loveliest as thou wast,
Such is the most my memory may desire;
Though more than Hope can claim, could Friendship less require?

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

CANTO FIRST

I

Oh, thou! in Hellas deemed of heavenly birth,°
Muse! formed or fabled at the minstrel's will!
Since shamed full oft by later lyres on earth,
Mine dares not call thee from thy sacred hill:°
Yet there I've wandered by thy vaunted rill;°
Yes! sighed o'er Delphi's long deserted shrine,°
Where, save that feeble fountain, all is still;
Nor mote my shell awake the weary Nine
To grace so plain a tale — this lowly lay of mine.

II

Whilome in Albion's Isle there dwelt a youth,
Who ne in virtue's ways did take delight;
But spent his days in riot most uncouth,
And vexed with mirth the drowsy ear of Night.
Ah me! in sooth he was a shameless wight,°
Sore given to revel and ungodly glee;
Few earthly things found favour in his sight
Save concubines and carnal companie,
And flaunting wassailers of high and low degree.

III

Childe Harold was he hight:° — but whence his name
And lineage long, it suits me not to say;
Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,
And had been glorious in another day:
But one sad losel° soils a name for aye,
However mighty in the olden time;
Nor all that heralds rake from coffined clay,
Nor florid prose, nor honied lies of rhyme,
Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.°

IV

Childe Harold basked him in the noontide sun,°
Disporting there like any other fly;
Nor deemed before his little day was done
One blast might chill him into misery.
But long ere scarce a third of his passed by,
Worse than adversity the Childe befell;
He felt the fulness of satiety:°
Then loathed he in his native land to dwell,
Which seemed to him more lone than Eremite's sad cell.

V

For he through Sin's long labyrinth had run,
Nor made atonement when he did amiss,
Had sighed to many though he loved but one,°
And that loved one, alas! could ne'er be his.
Ah, happy she! to 'scape from him whose kiss
Had been pollution unto aught so chaste;
Who soon had left her charms for vulgar bliss,
And spoiled her goodly lands to gild his waste,
Nor calm domestic peace had ever deigned to taste.

VI

And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart,°
And from his fellow bacchanals would flee;
'Tis said, at times the sullen tear would start,
But Pride congealed the drop within his ee:
Apart he stalked in joyless reverie,
And from his native land resolved to go,
And visit scorching climes beyond the sea:
With pleasure drugged, he almost longed for woe,
And e'en for change of scene would seek the shades below.

VII

The Childe departed from his father's hall:
It was a vast and venerable pile;°
So old, it seemed only not to fall,
Yet strength was pillared in each massy aisle.
Monastic dome! condemned to uses vile!
Where Superstition once had made her den
Now Paphian girls° were known to sing and smile;
And monks might deem their time was come agen,
If ancient tales say true, nor wrong these holy men.

VIII

Yet oft-times in his maddest mirthful mood°
Strange pangs would flash along Childe Harold's brow,
As if the memory of some deadly feud
Or disappointed passion lurked below:
But this none knew, nor haply cared to know;
For his was not that open, artless soul
That feels relief by bidding sorrow flow,
Nor sought he friend to counsel or condole,
Whate'er this grief mote be, which he could not control.

IX

And none did love him: though to hall and bower
He gathered revellers from far and near,
He knew them flatt'rers of the festal hour;°
The heartless parasites of present cheer.
Yea! none did love him — not his lemans° dear —
But pomp and power alone are woman's care,
And where these are light Eros finds a feere;°
Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare,
And Mammon wins his way where Seraphs might despair.

X

Childe Harold had a mother° — not forgot,
Though parting from that mother he did shun;
A sister° whom he loved, but saw her not
Before his weary pilgrimage begun:
If friends he had, he bade adieu to none.
Yet deem not thence his breast a breast of steel:
Ye, who have known what 'tis to dote upon
A few dear objects, will in sadness feel
Such partings break the heart they fondly hope to heal.

XI

His house, his home, his heritage, his lands,
The laughing dames in whom he did delight,
Whose large blue eyes, fair locks, and snowy hands,
Might shake the saintship of an anchorite,
And long had fed his youthful appetite;
His goblets brimmed with every costly wine,
And all that mote to luxury invite,
Without a sigh he left,° to cross the brine,
And traverse Paynim° shores, and pass Earth's central line.

XII

The sails were filled, and fair the light winds blew,
As glad to waft him from his native home;
And fast the white rocks faded from his view,
And soon were lost in circumambient foam:
And then, it may be, of his wish to roam
Repented he, but in his bosom slept
The silent thought, nor from his lips did come
One word of wail,° whilst others sate and wept,
And to the reckless gales unmanly moaning kept.

XIII

But when the sun was sinking in the sea
He seized his harp, which he at times could string,
And strike, albeit with untaught melody,
When deemed he no strange ear was listening:
And now his fingers o'er it he did fling,
And tuned his farewell° in the dim twilight.
While flew the vessel on her snowy wing,
And fleeting shores receded from his sight,
Thus to the elements he poured his last 'Good Night.'

I

Adieu, adieu! my native shore°
Fades o'er the waters blue;
The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,
And shrieks the wild sea-mew.
Yon sun that sets upon the sea
We follow in his flight;
Farewell awhile to him and thee,
My native Land — Good Night!

II

A few short hours and he will rise
To give the morrow birth;
And I shall hail the main and skies,
But not my mother earth.
Deserted is my own good hall,
Its hearth is desolate;
Wild weeds are gathering on the wall;
My dog howls at the gate.°

III

Come hither, hither, my little page!°
Why dost thou weep and wail?
Or dost thou dread the billows' rage,
Or tremble at the gale?
But dash the tear-drop from thine eye;
Our ship is swift and strong:
Our fleetest falcon scarce can fly
More merrily along.'

IV

'Let winds be shrill, let waves roll high,
I fear not wave nor wind:
Yet marvel not, Sir Childe, that I
Am sorrowful in mind;
For I have from my father gone,
A mother whom I love,
And have no friend, save these alone,
But thee — and One above.

V

'My father blessed me fervently,
Yet did not much complain;
But sorely will my mother sigh
Till I come back again.'—
'Enough, enough, my little lad!
Such tears become thine eye;
If I thy guileless bosom had,
Mine° own would not be dry.

VI

'Come hither, hither, my staunch yeoman,°
Why dost thou look so pale?
Or dost thou dread a French foeman?°
Or shiver at the gale?'—
'Deem'st thou I tremble for my life?
Sir Childe, I'm not so weak;
But thinking on an absent wife
Will blanch a faithful cheek.

VII

'My spouse and boys dwell near thy hall,
Along the bordering lake,°
And when they on their father call,
What answer shall she make?'
'Enough,° enough, my yeoman good,
Thy grief let none gainsay:
But I, who am of lighter mood,
Will laugh to flee away.'

VIII

For who would trust the seeming sighs
Of wife or paramour?
Fresh feeres will dry the bright blue eyes
We late saw streaming o'er.
For pleasures past I do not grieve,
Nor perils gathering near;
My greatest grief is that I leave
No thing that claims a tear.

IX

And now I'm in the world alone,
Upon the wide, wide sea:
But why should I for others groan,
When none will sigh for me?
Perchance my dog will whine in vain,
Till fed by stranger hands;
But long ere I come back again
He'd tear me where he stands.

X

With thee, my bark, I'll swiftly go°
Athwart the foaming brine;
Nor care what land thou bear'st me to,
So not again to mine.
Welcome, welcome, ye dark-blue waves!
And when you fail my sight,
Welcome, ye deserts, and ye caves!
My native Land — Good Night!

XIV

On, on the vessel flies, the land is gone,
And winds are rude in Biscay's sleepless bay.
Four days are sped, but with the fifth, anon,
New shores descried make every bosom gay,
And Cintra's mountain greets them on their way,
And Tagus° dashing onward to the deep,
His fabled golden tribute bent to pay;
And soon on board the Lusian° pilots leap,
And steer 'twixt fertile shores where yet few rustics reap.

XV

Oh, Christ!° it is a goodly sight to see
What Heaven hath done for this delicious land!
What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree!
What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand!
But man would mar them with an impious hand:
And when the Almighty lifts his fiercest scourge
'Gainst those who most transgress his high command,
With treble vengeance will his hot shafts urge
Gaul's locust host,° and earth from fellest foemen purge.

XVI

What beauties doth Lisboa° first unfold?
Her image floating on that noble tide,
Which poets vainly pave with sands of gold,
But now whereon a thousand keels did ride
Of mighty strength, since Albion was allied,°
And to the Lusians did her aid afford:
A nation swoln with ignorance and pride,
Who lick yet loathe the hand that waves the sword
To save them from the wrath of Gaul's unsparing lord.

XVII

But whoso entereth within this town,
That, sheening far, celestial seems to be,
Disconsolate will wander up and down,
'Mid many things unsightly to strange ee;
For hut and palace show like filthily:
The dingy denizens are reared in dirt;
Ne personage of high or mean degree
Doth care for cleanliness of surtout or shirt,
Though shent° with Egypt's plague, unkempt, unwashed, unhurt.

XVIII

Poor, paltry slaves! yet born 'midst noblest scenes —
Why, Nature, waste thy wonders on such men?
Lo! Cintra's glorious Eden intervenes°
In variegated maze of mount and glen.
Ah me! what hand can pencil guide, or pen,
To follow half on which the eye dilates
Through views more dazzling unto mortal ken
Than those whereof such things the bard° relates,
Who to the awe-struck world unlocked Elysium's gates?

XIX

The horrid crags, by toppling convent crowned,
The cork-trees hoar that clothe the shaggy steep,
The mountain-moss by scorching skies imbrowned,
The sunken glen, whose sunless shrubs must weep,
The tender azure of the unruffled deep,
The orange tints that gild the greenest bough,
The torrents that from cliff to valley leap,
The vine on high, the willow branch below,
Mixed in one mighty scene, with varied beauty glow.

XX

Then slowly climb the many-winding way,
And frequent turn to linger as you go,
From loftier rocks new loveliness survey,
And rest ye at 'Our Lady's house of woe;'°
Where frugal monks their little relics show,
And sundry legends to the stranger tell:
Here impious men have punished been, and lo!
Deep in yon cave Honorius long did dwell,°
In hope to merit Heaven by making earth a Hell.

XXI

And here and there, as up the crags you spring,
Mark many rude-carved crosses near the path:
Yet deem not these devotion's offering —
These are memorials frail of murderous wrath:
For wheresoe'er the shrieking victim hath
Poured forth his blood beneath the assassin's knife,
Some hand erects a cross of mouldering lath;
And grove and glen with thousand such are rife
Throughout this purple land, where law secures not life.

XXII

On sloping mounds, or in the vale beneath,
Are domes where whilome kings did make repair;
But now the wild flowers round them only breathe;
Yet ruined splendour still is lingering there.
And yonder towers the Prince's palace fair:
There thou too, Vathek!° England's wealthiest son,
Once formed thy Paradise, as not aware
When wanton Wealth her mightiest deeds hath done,°
Meek Peace voluptuous lures was ever wont to shun.

XXIII

Here didst thou dwell, here schemes of pleasure plan,
Beneath yon mountain's ever beauteous brow:
But now, as if a thing unblest by Man,
Thy fairy dwelling is as lone as thou!
Here giant weeds a passage scarce allow
To halls deserted, portals gaping wide:
Fresh lessons to the thinking bosom,° how
Vain are the pleasaunces on earth supplied;
Swept into wrecks anon by Time's ungentle tide!

XXIV

Behold the hall° where chiefs were late convened!
Oh! dome displeasing unto British eye!
With diadem hight foolscap, lo! a fiend,°
A little fiend that scoffs incessantly,
There sits in parchment robe arrayed, and by
His side is hung a seal and sable scroll,
Where blazoned glare names known to chivalry,
And sundry signatures adorn the roll,
Whereat the Urchin° points and laughs with all his soul.

XXV

Convention is the dwarfish demon styled°
That foiled the knights in Marialva's dome:
Of brains (if brains they had) he them beguiled,
And turned a nation's shallow joy to gloom.
Here Folly dashed to earth the victor's plume,°
And Policy regained what arms had lost:
For chiefs like ours in vain may laurels bloom!
Woe to the conqu'ring, not the conquered host,
Since baffled Triumph droops on Lusitania's coast.

XXVI

And ever since that martial synod met,
Britannia sickens, Cintra! at thy name;
And folks in office at the mention fret,
And fain would blush, if blush they could, for shame.
How will posterity the deed proclaim!
Will not our own and fellow-nations sneer,
To view these champions cheated of their fame,
By foes in fight o'erthrown, yet victors here,
Where Scorn her finger points through many a coming year?°

XXVII

So deemed the Childe, as o'er the mountains he
Did take his way in solitary guise:
Sweet was the scene, yet soon he thought to flee,
More restless than the swallow in the skies:
Though here awhile he learned to moralize,
For Meditation fixed at times on him;
And conscious Reason whispered to despise
His early youth, misspent in maddest whim;
But as he gazed on truth his aching eyes grew dim.°

XXVIII

To horse! to horse!° he quits, for ever quits
A scene of peace, though soothing to his soul:
Again he rouses from his moping fits,
But seeks not now the harlot and the bowl.
Onward he flies, nor fixed as yet the goal
Where he shall rest him on his pilgrimage;
And o'er him many changing scenes must roll
Ere toil his thirst for travel can assuage,
Or he shall calm his breast, or learn experience sage.

XXIX

Yet Mafra° shall one moment claim delay,
Where dwelt of yore the Lusians' luckless queen; °
And church and court did mingle their array,
And mass and revel were alternate seen;
Lordlings and freres — ill-sorted fry I ween!
But here the Babylonian whore° hath built
A dome, where flaunts she in such glorious sheen,
That men forget the blood which she hath spilt,°
And bow the knee to Pomp that loves to varnish guilt.

XXX

O'er vales that teem with fruits, romantic hills,
(Oh, that such hills upheld a freeborn race!)
Whereon to gaze the eye with joyaunce fills,
Childe Harold wends through many a pleasant place.
Though sluggards deem it but a foolish chase,
And marvel men should quit their easy chair,
The toilsome way, and long, long league to trace,
Oh! there is sweetness in the mountain air,°
And life, that bloated Ease can never hope to share.

XXXI

More bleak to view the hills at length recede,
And, less luxuriant, smoother vales extend;
Immense horizon-bounded plains succeed!
Far as the eye discerns, withouten end,
Spain's realms appear whereon her shepherds tend
Flocks, whose rich fleece right well the trader knows —
Now must the pastor's arm his lambs defend:
For Spain is compassed by unyielding foes,°
And all must shield their all, or share Subjection's woes.

XXXII

Where Lusitania and her Sister meet,°
Deem ye what bounds the rival realms divide?
Or ere the jealous queens of nations greet,
Doth Tayo interpose his mighty tide?°
Or dark Sierras rise in craggy pride?
Or fence of art, like China's vasty wall?
Ne barrier wall, ne river deep and wide,
Ne horrid crags, nor mountains dark and tall,
Rise like the rocks that part Hispania's land from Gaul:

XXXIII

But these between a silver streamlet° glides,
And scarce a name distinguisheth the brook,
Though rival kingdoms press its verdant sides.
Here leans the idle shepherd on his crook,
And vacant on the rippling waves doth look,
That peaceful still 'twixt bitterest foemen flow;
For proud each peasant as the noblest duke:
Well doth the Spanish hind the difference know
'Twixt him and Lusian slave,° the lowest of the low.

XXXIV

But ere the mingling bounds have far been passed,°
Dark Guadiana rolls his power along
In sullen billows, murmuring and vast,
So noted ancient roundelays among.
Whilome upon his banks did legions throng
Of Moor and Knight, in mailed splendour drest:
Here ceased the swift their race, here sunk the strong;
The Paynim turban and the Christian crest°
Mixed on the bleeding stream, by floating hosts oppressed.

XXXV

Oh, lovely Spain! renowned romantic land!
Where is that standard which Pelagio° bore,
When Cava's traitor-sire° first called the band
That dyed thy mountain-streams with Gothic gore?°
Where are those bloody banners which of yore
Waved o'er thy sons, victorious to the gale,
And drove at last the spoilers to their shore?
Red gleamed the cross,° and waned the crescent pale,
While Afric's echoes thrilled with Moorish matrons' wail.

XXXVI

Teems not each ditty with the glorious tale?
Ah! such, alas! the hero's amplest fate!
When granite moulders and when records fail,
A peasant's plaint° prolongs his dubious date.
Pride! bend thine eye from heaven to thine estate,
See how the Mighty shrink into a song!
Can Volume, Pillar, Pile, preserve thee great?
Or must thou trust Tradition's simple tongue,
When Flattery sleeps with thee, and History does thee wrong?

XXXVII

Awake, ye sons of Spain! awake! advance!
Lo! Chivalry, your ancient goddess, cries,
But wields not, as of old, her thirsty lance,
Nor shakes her crimson plumage in the skies:
Now on the smoke of blazing bolts° she flies,
And speaks in thunder through yon engine's roar:
In every peal she calls — 'Awake! arise!'
Say, is her voice more feeble than of yore,
When her war-song was heard on Andalusia's shore?°

XXXVIII

Hark! heard you not those hoofs of dreadful note?
Sounds not the clang of conflict on the heath?
Saw ye not whom the reeking sabre smote,
Nor saved your brethren ere they sank beneath
Tyrants and tyrants' slaves? — the fires of death,
The bale-fires flash on high: — from rock to rock°
Each volley tells that thousands cease to breathe;
Death rides upon the sulphury Siroc,
Red battle stamps his foot, and nations feel the shock.

XXXIX

Lo! where the Giant on the mountain stands,
His blood-red tresses deep'ning in the sun,
With death-shot glowing in his fiery hands,
And eye that scorcheth all it glares upon;
Restless it rolls, now fixed, and now anon
Flashing afar, — and at his iron feet
Destruction cowers, to mark what deeds are done;
For on this morn° three potent nations meet,
To shed before his shrine the blood he deems most sweet.

XL

By Heaven! it is a splendid sight to see —
For one who hath no friend, no brother there —
Their rival scarfs of mixed embroidery,
Their various arms that glitter in the air!
What gallant war-hounds rouse them from their lair,
And gnash their fangs, loud yelling for the prey!
All join the chase, but few the triumph share;
The Grave shall bear the chiefest prize away,
And Havoc scarce for joy can number their array.

XLI

Three hosts combine to offer sacrifice;
Three tongues prefer strange orisons on high;
Three gaudy standards flout the pale blue skies;
The shouts are France, Spain, Albion, Victory!
The foe, the victim, and the fond ally
That fights for all, but ever fights in vain,
Are met — as if at home they could not die —
To feed the crow on Talavera's plain,
And fertilize the field that each pretends to gain.

XLII

There shall they rot — Ambition's honoured fools!
Yes, Honour decks the turf that wraps their clay!
Vain Sophistry! in these behold the tools,
The broken tools, that tyrants cast away
By myriads, when they dare to pave their way
With human hearts — to what? — a dream alone.
Can despots compass aught that hails their sway?
Or call with truth one span of earth their own,
Save that wherein at last they crumble bone by bone?

XLIII

Oh, Albuera![°] glorious field of grief!
As o'er thy plain the Pilgrim pricked his steed,
Who could foresee thee, in a space so brief,
A scene where mingling foes should boast and bleed!
Peace to the perished! may the warrior's meed
And tears of triumph their reward prolong!
Till others fall where other chieftains lead
Thy name shall circle round the gaping throng,
And shine in worthless lays, the theme of transient song.

XLIV

Enough of Battle's minions! let them play
Their game of lives, and barter breath for fame:
Fame that will scarce reanimate their clay,
Though thousands fall to deck some single name.
In sooth 'twere sad to thwart their noble aim
Who strike, blest hirelings! for their country's good
And die, that living might have proved her shame;
Perished, perchance, in some domestic feud,
Or in a narrower sphere wild Rapine's path pursued.

XLV

Full swiftly Harold wends his lonely way
Where proud Sevilla triumphs unsubdued!
Yet is she free — the spoiler's wished-for prey!
Soon, soon shall Conquest's fiery foot intrude,°
Blackening her lovely domes with traces rude.
Inevitable hour! 'Gainst fate to strive
Where Desolation plants her famished brood
Is vain, or Ilion, Tyre might yet survive,
And Virtue vanquish all, and Murder cease to thrive.

XLVI

But all unconscious of the coming doom
The feast, the song, the revel here abounds;
Strange modes of merriment the hours consume,
Nor bleed these patriots with their country's wounds;
Nor here War's clarion, but Love's rebeck sounds;
Here Folly still his votaries inthralls;
And young-eyed Lewdness walks her midnight rounds;
Girt with the silent crimes of Capitals,
Still to the last kind Vice clings to the tottering walls.

XLVII

Not so the rustic — with his trembling mate
He lurks, nor casts his heavy eye afar,
Lest he should view his vineyard desolate,
Blasted below the dun hot breath of war.
No more beneath soft Eve's consenting star°
Fandango twirls his jocund castanet:°
Ah, monarchs! could ye taste the mirth ye mar,
Not in the toils of Glory would ye fret;°
The hoarse dull drum would sleep, and Man be happy yet.

XLVIII

How carols now the lusty muleteer?
Of love, romance, devotion is his lay,
As whilome he was wont the leagues to cheer,
His quick bells wildly jingling on the way?
No! as he speeds, he chants 'Vivā el Rey!'°
And checks his song to execrate Godoy,°
The royal wittol Charles, and curse the day
When first Spain's queen beheld the black-eyed boy,
And gore-faced Treason sprung from her adulterate joy.

XLIX

On yon long, level plain, at distance crowned
With crags, whereon those Moorish turrets rest,
Wide scattered hoof-marks dint the wounded ground;
And, scathed by fire, the greensward's darkened vest
Tells that the foe was Andalusia's guest:
Here was the camp, the watch-flame, and the host,
Here the bold peasants stormed the dragon's nest:
Still does he mark it with triumphant boast;
And points to yonder cliffs, which oft were won and lost.

L

And whomsoe'er along the path you meet
Bears in his cap the badge° of crimson hue,
Which tells you whom to shun and whom to greet:
Woe to the man that walks in public view
Without of loyalty this token true:
Sharp is the knife, and sudden is the stroke;
And sorely would the Gallic foeman rue,
If subtle poniards, wrapt beneath the cloke,
Could blunt the sabre's edge, or clear the cannon's smoke.

LI

At every turn Morena's dusky height°
Sustains aloft the battery's iron load;
And, far as mortal eye can compass sight,
The mountain-howitzer, the broken road,
The bristling palisade, the fosse o'erflowed,
The stationed bands, the never-vacant watch,
The magazine in rocky durance stowed,
The holstered steed beneath the shed of thatch,
The ball-piled pyramid, the ever blazing match,

LII

Portend the deeds to come: °— but he whose nod
Has tumbled feebler despots from their sway,
A moment pauseth ere he lifts the rod;
A little moment deigneth to delay:
Soon will his legions sweep through these their way;
The West must own the Scourger of the world.
Ah! Spain! how sad will be thy reckoning-day,
When soars Gaul's Vulture, with his wings unfurled,
And thou shalt view thy sons in crowds to Hades hurled.

LIII

And must they fall? the young, the proud, the brave,
To swell one bloated Chief's° unwholesome reign?
No step between submission and a grave?
The rise of rapine and the fall of Spain?
And doth the Power that man adores ordain
Their doom, nor heed the suppliant's appeal?
Is all that desperate Valour acts in vain?
And Counsel sage, and patriotic Zeal,
The Veteran's skill, Youth's fire, and Manhood's heart of steel?

LIV

Is it for this the Spanish maid,° aroused,
Hangs on the willow her unstrung guitar,
And, all unsexed, the anlace hath espoused,
Sung the loud song, and dared the deed of war?
And she, whom once the semblance of a scar
Appalled, an owlet's larum chilled with dread,
Now views the column-scattering bayonet jar,
The falchion flash, and o'er the yet warm dead
Stalks with Minerva's step where Mars might quake to tread.

LV

Ye who shall marvel when you hear her tale,
Oh! had you known her in her softer hour,
Marked her black eye that mocks her coal-black veil,
Heard her light, lively tones in Lady's bower,
Seen her long locks that foil the painter's power,
Her fairy form, with more than female grace,
Scarce would you deem that Saragoza's tower
Beheld her smile in Danger's Gorgon face,°
Thin the closed ranks, and lead in Glory's fearful chase.

LVI

Her lover sinks° — she sheds no ill-timed tear ;
Her chief is slain — she fills his fatal post ;
Her fellows flee — she checks their base career ;
The foe retires — she heads the sallying host :
Who can appease like her a lover's ghost ?
Who can avenge so well a leader's fall ?
What maid retrieve when man's flushed hope is lost ?
Who hang so fiercely on the flying Gaul,
Foiled by a woman's hand, before a battered wall ?

LVII

Yet are Spain's maids no race of Amazons,
But formed for all the witching arts of love :
Though thus in arms they emulate her sons,
And in the horrid phalanx dare to move,
'Tis but the tender fierceness of the dove,
Pecking the hand that hovers o'er her mate :
In softness as in firmness far above
Remoter females,° famed for sickening prate ;
Her mind is nobler sure, her charms perchance as great.

LVIII

The seal Love's dimpling finger hath impressed
Denotes how soft that chin which bears his touch :
Her lips, whose kisses pout to leave their nest,
Bid man be valiant ere he merit such :
Her glance how wildly beautiful ! how much
Hath Phœbus wooed in vain to spoil her cheek,
Which glows yet smoother from his amorous clutch !
Who round the North for paler dames would seek ?
How poor their forms appear ! how languid, wan, and weak !

LIX

Match me, ye climes! which poets love to laud;
Match me, ye harems of the land where now
I strike my strain, far distant, to applaud
Beauties that even a cynic must avow;
Match me those Houries, whom ye scarce allow
To taste the gale lest Love should ride the wind,
With Spain's dark-glancing daughters — deign to know
There your wise Prophet's paradise we find,
His black-eyed maids of Heaven, angelically kind.

LX

Oh, thou Parnassus![°] whom I now survey,
Not in the phrensy of a dreamer's eye,
Not in the fabled landscape of a lay,
But soaring snow-clad through thy native sky,
In the wild pomp of mountain-majesty!
What marvel if I thus essay to sing?
The humblest of thy pilgrims passing by
Would gladly woo thine Echoes with his string,
Though from thy heights no more one Muse will wave her wing.

LXI

Oft have I dreamed of Thee! whose glorious name
Who knows not, knows not man's divinest lore:
And now I view thee, 'tis, alas, with shame
That I in feeblest accents must adore.
When I recount thy worshippers of yore
I tremble, and can only bend the knee;
Nor raise my voice, nor vainly dare to soar,
But gaze beneath thy cloudy canopy
In silent joy to think at last I look on thee!

LXII

Happier in this than mightiest bards have been,
Whose fate to distant homes confined their lot,
Shall I unmoved behold the hallowed scene,
Which others rave of, though they know it not?
Though here no more Apollo haunts his grot,
And thou, the Muses' seat, art now their grave,
Some gentle spirit still pervades the spot,
Sighs in the gale, keeps silence in the cave,
And glides with glassy foot o'er yon melodious wave.°

LXIII

Of thee hereafter. — Even amidst my strain
I turned aside to pay my homage here;
Forgot the land, the sons, the maids of Spain;
Her fate, to every freeborn bosom dear;
And hailed thee, not perchance without a tear.
Now to my theme — but from thy holy haunt
Let me some remnant, some memorial bear;
Yield me one leaf of Daphne's deathless plant,°
Nor let thy votary's hope be deemed an idle vaunt.

LXIV

But ne'er didst thou, fair Mount, when Greece was young,
See round thy giant base a brighter choir,
Nor e'er did Delphi, when her priestess sung
The Pythian hymn with more than mortal fire,
Behold a train more fitting to inspire
The song of love, than Andalusia's maids,
Nurst in the glowing lap of soft desire:
Ah! that to these were given such peaceful shades
As Greece can still bestow, though Glory fly her glades.

LXV

Fair is proud Seville; let her country boast
Her strength, her wealth, her site of ancient days;°
But Cadiz, rising on the distant coast,
Calls forth a sweeter, though ignoble praise.
Ah, Vice! how soft are thy voluptuous ways!
While boyish blood is mantling, who can 'scape
The fascination of thy magic gaze?
A Cherub-hydra round us dost thou gape,
And mould to every taste thy dear delusive shape.

LXVI

When Paphos fell by Time°—accursed Time!
The Queen who conquers all must yield to thee—
The Pleasures fled, but sought as warm a clime;
And Venus, constant to her native sea,°
To nought else constant, hither deigned to flee,
And fixed her shrine within these walls of white;
Though not to one dome circumscribeth she
Her worship, but, devoted to her rite,
A thousand altars rise, for ever blazing bright.

LXVII

From morn till night, from night till startled Morn
Peeps blushing on the revel's laughing crew,
The song is heard, the rosy garland worn;
Devices quaint, and frolics ever new,
Tread on each other's kibes. A long adieu
He bids to sober joy that here sojourns:
Nought interrupts the riot, though in lieu
Of true devotion monkish incense burns,
And love and prayer unite, or rule the hour by turns.

LXVIII

The Sabbath comes, a day of blessed rest:
What hallows it upon this Christian shore?
Lo! it is sacred to a solemn feast:
Hark! heard you not the forest-monarch's roar?
Crashing the lance, he snuffs the spouting gore
Of man and steed, o'erthrown beneath his horn;
The thronged arena shakes with shouts for more;
Yells the mad crowd o'er entrails freshly torn,
Nor shrinks the female eye, nor ev'n affects to mourn.

LXIX

The seventh day this;° the jubilee of man.
London, right well thou know'st the day of prayer:
Then thy spruce citizen, washed artisan,
And smug apprentice gulp their weekly air:
Thy coach of Hackney, whiskey, one-horse chair,
And humblest gig through sundry suburbs whirl;
To Hampstead, Brentford, Harrow make repair;°
Till the tired jade the wheel forgets to hurl,
Provoking envious gibe from each pedestrian churl.

LXX

Some o'er thy Thamis row the ribboned fair,
Others along the safer turnpike fly,
Some Richmond-hill° ascend, some scud to Ware,
And many to the steep of Highgate° hie.
Ask ye, Bœotian shades!° the reason why?
'Tis to the worship of the solemn Horn,°
Grasped in the holy hand of Mystery,
In whose dread name both men and maids are sworn,
And consecrate the oath with draught, and dance till morn.

LXXI

All have their fooleries — not alike are thine,
Fair Cadiz, rising o'er the dark blue sea!
Soon as the matin bell proclaimeth nine,
Thy saint adorers count the rosary:
Much is the VIRGIN teased to shrive them free —
Well do I ween the only Virgin there —
From crimes as numerous as her beadsmen be;
Then to the crowded circus forth they fare:
Young, old, high, low, at once the same diversion share.

LXXII

The lists are oped, the spacious area cleared,°
Thousands on thousands piled are seated round;
Long ere the first loud trumpet's note is heard,
Ne vacant space for lated wight is found:
Here dons, grandees, but chiefly dames abound,
Skilled in the ogle of a roguish eye,
Yet ever well inclined to heal the wound;
None through their cold disdain are doomed to die,
As moon-struck bards complain, by Love's sad archery.

LXXIII

Hushed is the din of tongues — on gallant steeds,
With milk-white crest, gold spur, and light-poised lance,
Four cavaliers prepare for venturous deeds,
And lowly bending to the lists advance;
Rich are their scarfs, their chargers featly prance:
If in the dangerous game they shine to-day,
The crowd's loud shout and ladies' lovely glance,
Best prize of better acts, they bear away,
And all that kings or chiefs e'er gain their toils repay.

LXXIV

In costly sheen and gaudy cloak arrayed,
But all afoot, the light-limbed Matadore
Stands in the centre, eager to invade
The lord of lowing herds: but not before
The ground, with cautious tread, is traversed o'er,
Lest aught unseen should lurk to thwart his speed:
His arms a dart, he fights aloof, nor more
Can man achieve without the friendly steed —
Alas! too oft condemned for him to bear and bleed.

LXXV

Thrice sounds the clarion: lo! the signal falls,
The den expands, and expectation mute
Gapes round the silent circle's peopled walls.
Bounds with one lashing spring the mighty brute,
And, wildly staring, spurns, with sounding foot,
The sand, nor blindly rushes on his foe:
Here, there, he points his threatening front, to suit
His first attack, wide waving to and fro
His angry tail; red rolls his eye's dilated glow.

LXXVI

Sudden he stops; his eye is fixed: away,
Away, thou heedless boy, prepare the spear!
Now is thy time to perish, or display
The skill that yet may check his mad career.
With well-timed croupe the nimble coursers veer;
On foams the bull, but not unscathed he goes;
Streams from his flank the crimson torrent clear:
He flies, he wheels, distracted with his throes;
Dart follows dart; lance, lance; loud bellowings speak his woes.

LXXVII

Again he comes; nor dart nor lance avail,
Nor the wild plunging of the tortured horse:
Though man and man's avenging arms assail,
Vain are his weapons, vainer is his force.
One gallant steed is stretched a mangled corse;
Another, hideous sight! unseamed appears,
His gory chest unveils life's panting source;
Though death-struck, still his feeble frame he rears;
Staggering, but stemming all, his lord unharmed he bears.

LXXVIII

Foiled, bleeding, breathless, furious to the last,
Full in the centre stands the bull at bay,
'Mid wounds, and clinging darts, and lances brast,
And foes disabled in the brutal fray:
And now the Matadores around him play,
Shake the red cloak, and poise the ready brand:
Once more through all he bursts his thundering way —
Vain rage! the mantle quits the conynge hand,
Wraps his fierce eye — 'tis past — he sinks upon the sand!

LXXIX

Where his vast neck just mingles with the spine,
Sheathed in his form the deadly weapon lies.
He stops — he starts — disdaining to decline;
Slowly he falls, amidst triumphant cries,
Without a groan, without a struggle dies.
The decorated car appears — on high
The corse is piled — sweet sight for vulgar eyes —
Four steeds that spurn the rein, as swift as shy,
Hurl the dark bulk along, scarce seen in dashing by.

LXXX

Such the ungentle sport that oft invites
The Spanish maid, and cheers the Spanish swain.
Nurtured in blood betimes, his heart delights
In vengeance, gloating on another's pain.
What private feuds the troubled village stain!
Though now one phalanxed host should meet the foe.
Enough, alas! in humble homes remain,
To meditate 'gainst friends the secret blow,
For some slight cause of wrath, whence life's warm stream must flow.

LXXXI

But Jealousy has fled: his bars, his bolts,
His withered sentinel, Duenna sage!
And all whereat the generous soul revolts,
Which the stern dotard deemed he could encage,
Have passed to darkness with the vanished age.
Who late so free as Spanish girls were seen —
Ere War uprose in his volcanic rage, —
With braided tresses bounding o'er the green,
While on the gay dance shone Night's lover-loving Queen?

LXXXII

Oh! many a time and oft, had Harold loved,
Or dreamed he loved, since rapture is a dream;
But now his wayward bosom was unmoved,
For not yet had he drunk of Lethe's stream;
And lately had he learned° with truth to deem
Love has no gift so grateful as his wings:
How fair, how young, how soft soe'er he seem,
Full from the fount of Joy's delicious springs
Some bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom flings.

LXXXIII

Yet to the beauteous form he was not blind,
Though now it moved him as it moves the wise;
Not that Philosophy on such a mind
E'er deigned to bend her chastely-awful eyes:
But Passion raves itself to rest, or flies,
And Vice, that digs her own voluptuous tomb,
Had buried long his hopes, no more to rise:
Pleasure's palled victim! life-abhorring gloom
Wrote on his faded brow curst Cain's unresting doom.

LXXXIV

Still he beheld, nor mingled with the throng;
But viewed them not with misanthropic hate:
Fain would he now have joined the dance, the song;
But who may smile that sinks beneath his fate?
Nought that he saw his sadness could abate:
Yet once he struggled 'gainst the demon's sway,
And as in Beauty's bower he pensive sate,
Poured forth this unpremeditated lay,
To charms as fair as those that soothed his happier day.

TO INEZ°

I

Nay, smile not at my sullen brow;
Alas! I cannot smile again:
Yet Heaven avert that ever thou
Shouldst weep, and haply weep in vain.

II

And dost thou ask what secret woe
I bear, corroding joy and youth?
And wilt thou vainly seek to know
A pang, even thou must fail to soothe?

III

It is not love, it is not hate,°
Nor low Ambition's honours lost,
That bids me loathe my present state,
And fly from all I prize the most:

IV

It is that weariness which springs
From all I meet, or hear, or see:
To me no pleasure Beauty brings;
Thine eyes have scarce a charm for me.

V

It is that settled, ceaseless gloom
The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore,
That will not look beyond the tomb,
But cannot hope for rest before.

VI

What Exile from himself can flee?
To zones though more and more remote,°
Still, still pursues where'er I be,
The blight of life — the demon, Thought.

VII

Yet others rapt in pleasure seem,
And taste of all that I forsake;
Oh! may they still of transport dream,
And ne'er, at least like me, awake!

VIII

Through many a clime 'tis mine to go,
With many a retrospection cursed;
And all my solace is to know,
Whate'er betides, I've known the worst.

IX

What is that worst? Nay do not ask —
In pity from the search forbear:
Smile on — nor venture to unmask
Man's heart, and view the hell that's there.

LXXXV

Adieu, fair Cadiz! yea, a long adieu!
Who may forget how well thy walls have stood?
When all were changing thou alone wert true,
First to be free, and last to be subdued:
And if amidst a scene, a shock so rude,
Some native blood was seen thy streets to dye,
A traitor° only fell beneath the feud:
Here all were noble, save Nobility;
None hugged a conqueror's chain, save fallen Chivalry!

LXXXVI

Such be the sons of Spain, and strange her fate!
They fight for freedom who were never free,
A kingless people° for a nerveless state;
Her vassals combat when their chieftains flee,
True to the veriest slaves of Treachery:
Fond of a land which gave them nought but life,
Pride points the path that leads to Liberty;
Back to the struggle, baffled in the strife,
War, war is still the cry, 'War even to the knife!'

LXXXVII

Ye, who would more of Spain and Spaniards know,°
Go, read whate'er is writ of bloodiest strife:
Whate'er keen Vengeance urged on foreign foe
Can act, is acting there against man's life:
From flashing scimitar to secret knife,
War mouldeth there each weapon to his need —
So may he guard the sister and the wife,
So may he make each curst oppressor bleed —
So may such foes deserve the most remorseless deed!°

LXXXVIII

Flows there a tear of pity for the dead?
Look o'er the ravage of the reeking plain;
Look on the hands with female slaughter red;
Then to the dogs resign the unburied slain,
Then to the vulture let each corse remain,
Albeit unworthy of the prey-bird's maw;
Let their bleached bones, and blood's unbleaching stain,
Long mark the battle-field with hideous awe:
Thus only may our sons conceive the scenes we saw!

LXXXIX

Nor yet, alas! the dreadful work is done;
Fresh legions pour adown the Pyrenees:
It deepens still, the work is scarce begun,
Nor mortal eye the distant end foresees.
Fallen nations gaze on Spain; if freed she frees
More than her fell Pizarros once enchained:
Strange retribution! now Columbia's ease°
Repairs the wrongs° that Quito's sons sustained,
While o'er the parent clime prowls Murder unrestrained.

XC

Not all the blood at Talavera° shed,
Not all the marvels of Barossa's fight,°
Not Albuera° lavish of the dead,
Have won for Spain her well-asserted right.
When shall her Olive-Branch be free from blight?
When shall she breathe her from the blushing toil?
How many a doubtful day shall sink in night,
Ere the Frank robber turn him from his spoil,
And Freedom's stranger-tree grow native of the soil!

XCI

And thou, my friend!°—since unavailing woe
Bursts from my heart, and mingles with the strain—
Had the sword laid thee with the mighty low
Pride might forbid e'en Friendship to complain:
But thus unlaureled to descend in vain,
By all forgotten, save the lonely breast,
And mix unbleeding with the boasted slain,
While Glory crowns so many a meaner crest!
What hadst thou done to sink so peacefully to rest?

XCII

Oh, known the earliest, and esteemed the most:
Dear to a heart where nought was left so dear!
Though to my hopeless days for ever lost,
In dreams deny me not to see thee here!
And Morn in secret shall renew the tear
Of Consciousness awaking to her woes,
And Fancy hover o'er thy bloodless bier,
Till my frail frame return to whence it rose,
And mourned and mourner lie united in repose.

XCIII

Here is one fytte of Harold's pilgrimage:
Ye who of him may further seek to know,
Shall find some tidings in a future page,
If he that rhymeth now may scribble moe.
Is this too much? stern critic! say not so:
Patience! and ye shall hear what he beheld
In other lands, where he was doomed to go:
Lands that contain the monuments of Eld,
Ere Greece and Grecian arts by barbarous hands were quelled.

CANTO SECOND

I

COME, blue-eyed maid° of heaven! — but thou, alas!
Didst never yet one mortal song inspire° —
Goddess of Wisdom! here thy temple° was,
And is, despite of war and wasting fire,°
And years, that bade thy worship to expire:
But worse than steel, and flame, and ages slow,
Is the dread sceptre and dominion dire°
Of men who never felt the sacred glow
That thoughts of thee and thine on polished breasts bestow.

II

Ancient of days! august Athena!° where,
Where are thy men of might? thy grand in soul?
Gone — glimmering through the dream of things that were:
First in the race that led to Glory's goal,
They won, and passed away — is this the whole?
A schoolboy's tale, the wonder of an hour!
The warrior's weapon and the sophist's stole
Are sought in vain, and o'er each mouldering tower,
Dim with the mist of years, gray flits the shade of power.

III

Son of the morning, rise ! ° approach you here :
Come — but molest not yon defenceless urn :
Look on this spot — a nation's sepulchre ! °
Abode of gods, whose shrines no longer burn.
Even gods must yield — religions take their turn :
'Twas Jove's — 'tis Mahomet's — and other creeds
Will rise with other years, till man shall learn
Vainly his incense soars, his victim bleeds;
Poor child of Doubt and Death, whose hope is built on reeds.

IV

Bound to the earth, he lifts his eye to heaven —
Is't not enough, unhappy thing ! to know
Thou art ? Is this a boon so kindly given,
That being, thou wouldst be again, and go,
Thou know'st not, reck'st not to what region, ° so
On earth no more, but mingled with the skies ?
Still wilt thou dream on future joy and woe ?
Regard and weigh yon dust before it flies :
That little urn saith more than thousand homilies.

V

Or burst the vanished Hero's lofty mound ; °
Far on the solitary shore he sleeps :
He fell, and falling nations mourned around ;
But now not one of saddening thousands weeps,
Nor warlike worshipper his vigil keeps
Where demi-gods appeared, as records tell.
Remove yon skull from out the scattered heaps :
Is that a temple where a God may dwell ?
Why even the worm at last disdains her shattered cell !

VI

Look on its broken arch, its ruined wall,°
Its chambers desolate, and portals foul:
Yes, this was once Ambition's airy hall,
The dome of Thought, the palace of the Soul:
Behold through each lack-lustre, eyeless hole,
The gay recess of Wisdom and of Wit
And Passion's host, that never brooked control:
Can all saint, sage, or sophist ever writ,
People this lonely tower, this tenement refit?

VII

Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest son!
'All that we know is, nothing can be known.'°
Why should we shrink from what we cannot shun?
Each hath his pang, but feeble sufferers groan
With brain-born dreams of evil all their own.
Pursue what Chance or Fate proclaimeth best;
Peace waits us on the shores of Acheron:
There no forced banquet claims the sated guest,
But Silence spreads the couch of ever welcome rest.

VIII

Yet if, as holiest men have deemed, there be
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee°
And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore;
How sweet it were in concert to adore°
With those who made our mortal labours light!
To hear each voice we feared to hear no more!
Behold each mighty shade revealed to sight,
The Bactrian, Samian° sage, and all who taught the right!

IX

There, thou! — whose love and life together fled,°
Have left me here to love and live in vain —
Twined with my heart, and can I deem thee dead
When busy Memory flashes on my brain?
Well — I will dream that we may meet again,
And woo the vision to my vacant breast:°
If aught of young Remembrance then remain,
Be as it may Futurity's behest,
For me 'twere bliss enough to know thy spirit blest!

X

Here let me sit upon this massy stone,°
The marble column's yet unshaken base;
Here, son of Saturn! was thy favourite throne:
Mightiest of many such! Hence let me trace
The latent grandeur of thy dwelling place.
It may not be: nor ev'n can Fancy's eye
Restore what Time hath laboured to deface.
Yet these proud pillars claim no passing sigh;
Unmoved the Moslem sits, the light Greek carols by.

XI

But who, of all the plunderers of yon fane°
On high, where Pallas lingered, loth to flee
The latest relic of her ancient reign;
The last, the worst, dull spoiler,° who was he?
Blush Caledonia!° such thy son could be!
England! I joy no child he was of thine:
Thy free-born men should spare what once was free;
Yet they could violate each saddening shrine,
And bear these altars o'er the long-reluctant brine.°

XII

But most the modern Pict's ignoble boast
To rive what Goth, and Turk, and Time hath spared:
Cold as the crags upon his native coast,
His mind as barren and his heart as hard,
Is he whose head conceived, whose hand prepared,
Aught to displace Athena's poor remains:
Her sons too weak the sacred shrine to guard,
Yet felt some portion of their mother's pains,
And never knew, till then, the weight of Despot's chains.

XIII

What! ° shall it e'er be said by British tongue,
Albion was happy in Athena's tears?
Though in thy name the slaves her bosom wrung,
Tell not the deed to blushing Europe's ears;
The ocean queen, the free Britannia, bears
The last poor plunder from a bleeding land:
Yes, she, whose gen'rous aid her name endears,
Tore down those remnants with a harpy's hand,
Which envious Eld forbore, and tyrants left to stand.

XIV

Where was thine Ægis, Pallas! that appalled°
Stern Alaric and Havoc on their way?
Where Peleus' son? whom Hell in vain enthralled,
His shade from Hades upon that dread day
Bursting to light in terrible array!
What! could not Pluto spare the chief once more,
To scare a second robber from his prey?
Idly he wandered on the Stygian shore,
Nor now preserved the walls he loved to shield before.

XV

Cold is the heart, fair Greece! that looks on thee,
Nor feels as lovers o'er the dust they loved;
Dull is the eye that will not weep to see
Thy walls defaced, thy mouldering shrines removed
By British hands, which it had best behoved
To guard those relics ne'er to be restored.
Curst be the hour when from their isle they roved,
And once again thy hapless bosom gored,
And snatched thy shrinking Gods to northern climes abhorred!

XVI

But where is Harold? shall I then forget
To urge the gloomy wanderer o'er the wave?
Little recked he of all that men regret;
No loved-one now in feigned lament could rave;
No friend the parting hand extended gave
Ere the cold stranger passed to other climes:
Hard is his heart whom charms may not enslave;
But Harold felt not as in other times,
And left without a sigh the land of war and crimes.°

XVII

He that has sailed upon the dark blue sea
Has viewed at times, I ween, a full fair sight;
When the fresh breeze is fair as breeze may be,
The white sail set, the gallant frigate tight;
Masts, spires, and strand retiring to the right,
The glorious main expanding o'er the bow,
The convoy spread like wild swans in their flight,
The dullest sailer wearing bravely now,
So gaily curl the waves before each dashing prow.

XVIII

And oh, the little warlike world within!
The well-reeved guns, the netted canopy,
The hoarse command, the busy humming din,
When, at a word, the tops are manned on high;
Hark, to the boatswain's call, the cheering cry!
While through the seaman's hand the tackle glides;
Or schoolboy midshipman that, standing by,
Strains his shrill pipe as good or ill betides,
And well the docile crew that skilful urchin guides.

XIX

White is the glassy deck, without a stain,
Where on the watch the staid lieutenant walks:
Look on that part which sacred doth remain
For the lone chieftain, who majestic stalks,
Silent and feared by all — not oft he talks
With aught beneath him, if he would preserve
That strict restraint, which broken, ever balks
Conquest and fame: but Britons rarely swerve°
From law, however stern, which tends their strength to nerve.

XX

Blow, swiftly blow, thou keel-compelling gale,
Till the broad sun withdraws his lessening ray!
Then must the pennant-bearer slacken sail,
That lagging barks may make their lazy way.
Ah! grievance sore, and listless dull delay,
To waste on sluggish hulks the sweetest breeze!
What leagues are lost, before the dawn of day,
Thus loitering pensive on the willing seas,
The flapping sail hauled down to halt for logs like these!

XXI

The moon is up; by Heaven, a lovely eve!
Long streams of light o'er dancing waves expand;
Now lads on shore may sigh, and maids believe:
Such be our fate when we return to land!
Meantime some rude Arion's° restless hand
Wakes the brisk harmony that sailors love;
A circle there of merry listeners stand,
Or to some well-known measure featly move,
Thoughtless, as if on shore they still were free to rove.

XXII

Through Calpe's° straits survey the steepy shore;
Europe and Afric on each other gaze!
Lands of the dark-eyed maid and dusky Moor
Alike beheld beneath pale Hecate's° blaze:
How softly on the Spanish shore she plays,
Disclosing rock, and slope, and forest brown,
Distinct, though darkening with her waning phase;
But Mauritania's giant-shadows frown,
From mountain-cliff to coast descending sombre down.

XXIII

'Tis night, when Meditation bids us feel°
We once have loved, though love is at an end:
The heart, lone mourner of its baffled zeal,°
Though friendless now, will dream it had a friend.
Who, with the weight of years would wish to bend,°
When Youth itself survives young Love and Joy?
Alas! when mingling souls forget to blend,
Death hath but little left him to destroy!
Ah! happy years! once more who would not be a boy?

XXIV

Thus bending o'er the vessel's laving side,
To gaze on Dian's wave-reflected sphere,
The soul forgets her schemes of hope and pride,
And flies unconscious o'er each backward year.
None are so desolate but something dear,
Dearer than self, possesses or possessed
A thought, and claims the homage of a tear;
A flashing pang! of which the weary breast
Would still, albeit in vain, the heavy heart divest.

XXV

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,°
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been;
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean;
This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold
Converse with Nature's charms, and view her stores unrolled.

XXVI

But midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,
And roam along, the world's tired denizen,
With none who bless us, none whom we can bless;°
Minions of splendour shrinking from distress!
None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
If we were not, would seem to smile the less,
Of all that flattered, followed, sought, and sued:
This is to be alone; this, this is solitude!

XXVII

More blest the life of godly eremite,
Such as on lonely Athos° may be seen,
Watching at eve upon the giant height,
Which looks o'er waves so blue, skies so serene,
That he who there at such an hour hath been
Will wistful linger on that hallowed spot;
Then slowly tear him from the witching scene,
Sigh forth one wish that such had been his lot,
Then turn to hate a world he had almost forgot.

XXVIII

Pass we the long, unvarying course, the track
Oft trod, that never leaves a trace behind;
Pass we the calm, the gale, the change, the tack,
And each well-known caprice of wave and wind;
Pass we the joys and sorrows sailors find,
Cooped in their winged sea-girt citadel;
The foul, the fair, the contrary, the kind,
As breezes rise and fall and billows swell,
Till on some jocund morn — lo, land! and all is well.

XXIX

But not in silence pass Calypso's° isles,
The sister tenants of the middle deep;
There for the weary still a haven smiles,
Though the fair goddess long hath ceased to weep,
And o'er her cliffs a fruitless watch to keep
For him who dared prefer a mortal bride:
Here, too, his boy essayed the dreadful leap
Stern Mentor urged from high to yonder tide:
While thus of both bereft, the nymph-queen doubly sighed.

XXX

Her reign is past, her gentle glories gone:
But trust not this; too easy youth, beware!
A mortal sovereign holds her dangerous throne,
And thou mayst find a new Calypso there.
Sweet Florence![°] could another ever share
This wayward, loveless heart, it would be thine:
But checked by every tie, I may not dare
To cast a worthless offering at thy shrine,
Nor ask so dear a breast to feel one pang for mine.

XXXI

Thus Harold deemed, as on that lady's eye
He looked, and met its beam without a thought,
Save admiration glancing harmless by:
Love kept aloof, albeit not far remote,
Who knew his votary often lost and caught,
But knew him as his worshipper no more,
And ne'er again the boy his bosom sought:
Since now he vainly urged him to adore,
Well deemed the little God his ancient sway was o'er.

XXXII

Fair Florence found, in sooth with some amaze,
One who, 'twas said, still sighed to all he saw,
Withstand, unmoved, the lustre of her gaze,
Which others hailed with real or mimic awe,
Their hope, their doom, their punishment, their law,
All that gay Beauty from her bondsmen claims:
And much she marvelled that a youth so raw
Nor felt, nor feigned at least, the oft-told flames,
Which, though sometimes they frown, yet rarely anger dames.

XXXIII

Little knew she that seeming marble heart,°
Now masked in silence or withheld by pride,
Was not unskilful in the spoiler's art,
And spread its snares licentious far and wide;
Nor from the base pursuit had turned aside,
As long as aught was worthy to pursue:
But Harold on such arts no more relied;
And had he doted on those eyes so blue,
Yet never would he join the lover's whining crew.

XXXIV

Not much he kens, I ween, of woman's breast,
Who thinks that wanton thing is won by sighs;
What careth she for hearts when once possessed?
Do proper homage to thine idol's eyes;
But not too humbly, or she will despise
Thee and thy suit, though told in moving tropes;
Disguise ev'n tenderness, if thou art wise;
Brisk confidence still best with woman copes:
Pique her and soothe in turn, soon Passion crowns thy hopes.

XXXV

'Tis an old lesson; Time approves it true,
And those who know it best, deplore it most;
When all is won that all desire to woo,°
The paltry prize is hardly worth the cost:
Youth wasted, minds degraded, honour lost,
These are thy fruits, successful Passion! these!
If kindly cruel, early hope is crost,
Still to the last it rankles, a disease,
Not to be cured, when love itself forgets to please.

XXXVI

Away! nor let me loiter in my song,
For we have many a mountain-path to tread,
And many a varied shore to sail along,
By pensive Sadness, not by Fiction, led —
Climes, fair withal as ever mortal head
Imagined in its little schemes of thought;
Or e'er in new Utopias were ared,
To teach man what he might be, or he ought;
If that corrupted thing could ever such be taught.

XXXVII

Dear Nature is the kindest mother still,°
Though alway changing, in her aspect mild;
From her bare bosom let me take my fill,
Her never-weaned, though not her favoured child.
Oh! she is fairest in her features wild,
Where nothing polished dares pollute her path:
To me by day or night she ever smiled,
Though I have marked her when none other hath,
And sought her more and more, and loved her best in wrath.

XXXVIII

Land of Albania! where Iskander° rose,
Theme of the young, and beacon of the wise,
And he his namesake, whose oft-baffled foes
Shrunk from his deeds of chivalrous emprize:
Land of Albania! let me bend mine eyes
On thee, thou rugged nurse of savage men!
The cross descends, thy minarets arise,
And the pale crescent sparkles in the glen,
Through many a cypress grove within each city's ken.

XXXIX

Childe Harold sailed, and passed the barren spot,°
Where sad Penelope o'erlooked the wave;
And onward viewed the mount,° not yet forgot,
The lover's refuge, and the Lesbian's grave.
Dark Sappho! could not verse immortal save
That breast imbued with such immortal fire?
Could she not live who life eternal gave?
If life eternal may await the lyre,
That only heaven to which Earth's children may aspire.

XL

'Twas on a Grecian autumn's gentle eve
Childe Harold hailed Leucadia's cape afar;
A spot he longed to see, nor cared to leave:
Oft did he mark the scenes of vanished war,
Actium, Lepanto, fatal Trafalgar;°
Mark them unmoved, for he would not delight —
Born beneath some remote inglorious star —
In themes of bloody fray, or gallant fight,
But loathed the bravo's trade, and laughed at martial wight.

XLI

But when he saw the evening star above
Leucadia's far-projecting rock of woe,
And hailed the last resort of fruitless love,
He felt, or deemed he felt, no common glow:
And as the stately vessel glided slow
Beneath the shadow of that ancient mount,
He watched the billows' melancholy flow,
And, sunk albeit in thought as he was wont,°
More placid seemed his eye, and smooth his pallid front.

XLII

Morn dawns; and with it stern Albania's hills,
Dark Suli's rocks, and Pindus' inland peak,°
Robed half in mist, bedewed with snowy rills,
Arrayed in many a dun and purple streak,
Arise; and, as the clouds along them break,
Disclose the dwelling of the mountaineer:
Here roams the wolf, the eagle whets his beak,
Birds, beasts of prey, and wilder men appear,
And gathering storms around convulse the closing year.

XLIII

Now Harold felt himself at length alone,
And bade to Christian tongues a long adieu;
Now he adventured on a shore unknown,°
Which all admire, but many dread to view:
His breast was armed 'gainst fate, his wants were few;
Peril he sought not, but ne'er shrank to meet;
The scene was savage, but the scene was new;
This made the ceaseless toil of travel sweet,
Beat back keen winter's blast, and welcomed summer's heat.

XLIV

Here the red cross,° for still the cross is here,
Though sadly scoffed at by the circumcised,
Forgets that pride to pampered priesthood dear;
Churchman and votary alike despised.
Foul Superstition! howsoe'er disguised,
Idol, saint, virgin, prophet, crescent, cross,
For whatsoever symbol thou art prized,
Thou sacerdotal gain, but general loss!
Who from true worship's gold can separate thy dross?

XLV

Ambracia's gulf° behold, where once was lost
A world for woman,° lovely, harmless thing!
In yonder rippling bay, their naval host
Did many a Roman chief and Asian king
To doubtful conflict, certain slaughter bring:
Look where the second Cæsar's trophies rose:°
Now, like the hands that reared them, withering:
Imperial anarchs, doubling human woes!
God! was thy globe ordained for such to win and lose?°

XLVI

From the dark barriers of that rugged clime,
Even to the centre of Illyria's vales,°
Childe Harold passed o'er many a mount sublime,
Through lands scarce noticed in historic tales;
Yet in famed Attica such lovely dales
Are rarely seen; nor can fair Tempe boast
A charm they know not; loved Parnassus fails,
Though classic ground and consecrated most,
To match some spots that lurk within this lowering coast.

XLVII

He passed bleak Pindus, Acherusia's lake,°
And left the primal city of the land,°
And onwards did his further journey take
To greet Albania's chief,° whose dread command
Is lawless law; for with a bloody hand
He sways a nation, turbulent and bold:
Yet here and there some daring mountain-band°
Disdain his power, and from their rocky hold
Hurl their defiance far, nor yield, unless to gold.

XLVIII

Monastic Zitza! ° from thy shady brow,
Thou small, but favoured spot of holy ground!
Where'er we gaze, around, above, below,
What rainbow tints, what magic charms are found!
Rock, river, forest, mountain, all abound,
And bluest skies that harmonise the whole:
Beneath, the distant torrent's rushing sound
Tells where the volumed cataract doth roll
Between those hanging rocks, that shock yet please the soul.

XLIX

Amidst the grove that crowns yon tufted hill,
Which, were it not for many a mountain nigh
Rising in lofty ranks, and loftier still,
Might well itself be deemed of dignity,
The convent's white walls glisten fair on high:
Here dwells the caloyer, nor rude is he,
Nor niggard of his cheer; the passer by
Is welcome still, nor heedless will he flee
From hence, if he delight kind Nature's sheen to see.

L

Here in the sultriest season let him rest,
Fresh is the green beneath those aged trees;
Here winds of gentlest wing will fan his breast,
From heaven itself he may inhale the breeze:
The plain is far beneath — oh! let him seize
Pure pleasure while he can; the scorching ray
Here pierceth not, impregnate with disease;
Then let his length the loitering pilgrim lay,
And gaze, untired, the morn, the noon, the eve away.

LI

Dusky and huge, enlarging on the sight,
Nature's volcanic amphitheatre,
Chimæra's alps extend from left to right:°
Beneath, a living valley seems to stir;
Flocks play, trees wave, streams flow, the mountain-fir
Nodding above; behold black Acheron,
Once consecrated to the sepulchre!
Pluto, if this be hell I look upon,
Close shamed Elysium's gates, my shade shall seek for none!

LII

Ne city's towers pollute the lovely view;
Unseen is Yanina, though not remote,
Veiled by the screen of hills: here men are few,
Scanty the hamlet, rare the lonely cot:
But peering down each precipice, the goat
Browseth; and, pensive o'er his scattered flock,
The little shepherd in his white capote
Doth lean his boyish form along the rock,
Or in his cave awaits the tempest's short-lived shock.

LIII

Oh, where, Dodona,° is thine aged grove,
Prophetic fount, and oracle divine?
What valley echoed the response of Jove?
What trace remaineth of the Thunderer's shrine?
All, all forgotten — and shall man repine
That his frail bonds to fleeting life are broke?
Cease, fool! the fate of gods may well be thine:
Wouldst thou survive the marble or the oak?
When nations, tongues, and worlds must sink beneath the stroke.

LIV

Epirus' bounds recede, and mountains fail;
Tired of upgazing still, the wearied eye
Reposes gladly on as smooth a vale
As ever Spring yclad in grassy dye:
Ev'n on a plain no humble beauties lie,
Where some bold river breaks the lone expanse,
And woods along the banks are waving high,
Whose shadows in the glassy waters dance,
Or with the moonbeam sleep in midnight's solemn trance.

LV

The sun had sunk behind vast Tomerit,°
And Laos° wide and fierce came roaring by;
The shades of wonted night were gathering yet,
When, down the steep banks winding warily,
Childe Harold saw, like meteors in the sky,
The glittering minarets of Tepalen,°
Whose walls o'erlook the stream; and drawing nigh,
He heard the busy hum of warrior-men
Swelling the breeze that sighed along the lengthening glen.

LVI

He passed the sacred Haram's silent tower,°
And underneath the wide o'erarching gate
Surveyed the dwelling of this chief of power,
Where all around proclaimed his high estate.
Amidst no common pomp the despot sate,
While busy preparation shook the court,
Slaves, eunuchs, soldiers, guests, and santons wait;
Within a palace, and without, a fort:
Here men of every clime appear to make resort.

LVII

Richly caparisoned, a ready row
Of armed horse, and many a warlike store.
Circled the wide extending court below;
Above, strange groups adorned the corridore;
And oft-times through the area's echoing door,
Some high-capped Tartar spurred his steed away:
The Turk, the Greek, the Albanian, and the Moor,
Here mingled in their many-hued array,
While the deep war-drum's sound announced the close of day.

LVIII

The wild Albanian kirtled to his knee,
With shawl-girt head and ornamented gun,
And gold-embroidered garments, fair to see:
The crimson-scarfed men of Macedon;
The Delhi with his cap of terror on,°
The crooked glaive; the lively, supple Greek;
And swarthy Nubia's mutilated son;°
The bearded Turk, that rarely deigns to speak,
Master of all around, too potent to be meek,

LIX

Are mixed conspicuous: some recline in groups,
Scanning the motley scene that varies round;
There some grave Moslem to devotion stoops,
And some that smoke, and some that play are found;
Here the Albanian proudly treads the ground:
Half whispering there the Greek is heard to prate;
Hark! from the mosque the nightly solemn sound,
The Muezzin's call doth shake the minaret,°
'There is no god but God! — to prayer — lo! God is great!'

LX

Just at this season Ramazani's fast°
Through the long day its penance did maintain;
But when the lingering twilight hour was past,
Revel and feast assumed the rule again:
Now all was bustle, and the menial train
Prepared and spread the plenteous board within;
The vacant gallery now seemed made in vain.
But from the chambers came the mingling din,
As page and slave anon were passing out and in.

LXI

Here woman's voice is never heard: apart,
And scarce permitted, guarded, veiled, to move,
She yields to one her person and her heart,
Tamed to her cage, nor feels a wish to rove:
For, not unhappy in her master's love,
And joyful in a mother's gentlest cares,
Blest cares! all other feelings far above!
Herself more sweetly rears the babe she bears,
Who never quits the breast, no meaner passion shares.°

LXII

In marble-paved pavilion, where a spring
Of living water from the centre rose,
Whose bubbling did a genial freshness fling,
And soft voluptuous couches breathed repose,
Ali reclined, a man of war and woes:°
Yet in his lineaments ye cannot trace,
While Gentleness her milder radiance throws
Along that aged venerable face,
The deeds that lurk beneath, and stain him with disgrace.

LXIII

It is not that yon hoary lengthening beard
Ill suits the passions which belong to youth;
Love conquers age — so Hafiz° hath averred,
So sings the Teian, and he sings in sooth —
But crimes that scorn the tender voice of ruth,
Beseeming all men ill, but most the man
In years, have marked him with a tiger's tooth;
Blood follows blood, and, through their mortal span,
In bloodier acts conclude those who with blood began.

LXIV

'Mid many things most new to ear and eye°
The pilgrim rested here his weary feet,
And gazed around on Moslem luxury,
Till quickly wearied with that spacious seat
Of Wealth and Wantonness, the choice retreat
Of sated Grandeur from the city's noise:
And were it humbler it in sooth were sweet;
But Peace abhorreth artificial joys,
And Pleasure, leagued with Pomp, the zest of both destroys.

LXV

Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack
Not virtues, were those virtues more mature.
Where is the foe that ever saw their back?
Who can so well the toil of war endure?
Their native fastnesses not more secure
Than they in doubtful time of troublous need:
Their wrath how deadly! but their friendship sure,
When Gratitude or Valour bids them bleed,
Unshaken rushing on where'er their chief may lead.

LXVI

Childe Harold saw them in their chieftain's tower
Thronging to war in splendour and success;
And after viewed them, when, within their power,
Himself awhile the victim of distress;°
That saddening hour when bad men hotlier press;
But these did shelter him beneath their roof,
When less barbarians would have cheered him less,
And fellow-countrymen have stood aloof° —
In aught that tries the heart how few withstand the proof.

LXVII

It chanced that adverse winds once drove his bark
Full on the coast of Suli's shaggy shore,°
When all around was desolate and dark;
To land was perilous, to sojourn more;
Yet for a while the mariners forbore,
Dubious to trust where treachery might lurk:
At length they ventured forth, though doubting sore
That those who loathe alike the Frank and Turk
Might once again renew their ancient butcher-work.

LXVIII

Vain fear! the Suliotes stretched the welcome hand,
Led them o'er rocks and past the dangerous swamp,
Kinder than polished slaves though not so bland,
And piled the hearth, and wrung their garments damp,
And filled the bowl, and trimmed the cheerful lamp,
And spread their fare; though homely, all they had:
Such conduct bears philanthropy's rare stamp —
To rest the weary and to soothe the sad,
Doth lesson happier men, and shames at least the bad.

LXIX

It came to pass, that when he did address
Himself to quit at length this mountain-land,
Combined marauders half-way barred egress,
And wasted far and near with glaive and brand;
And therefore did he take a trusty band
To traverse Acarnania's forest wide,
In war well seasoned, and with labours tanned,
Till he did greet white Achelous' tide,°
And from his further bank Ætolia's wolds espied.

LXX

Where lone Utraikey° forms its circling cove,
And weary waves retire to gleam at rest,
How brown the foliage of the green hill's grove,
Nodding at midnight o'er the calm bay's breast,
As winds come lightly whispering from the west,
Kissing, not ruffling, the blue deep's serene: —
Here Harold was received a welcome guest;
Nor did he pass unmoved the gentle scene,
For many a joy could he from Night's soft presence glean.

LXXI

On the smooth shore the night-fires brightly blazed,
The feast was done, the red wine circling fast,
And he that unawares had there ygazed
With gaping wonderment had stared aghast;
For ere night's midmost, stillest hour was past,
The native revels of the troop began;
Each Palikar his sabre from him cast,
And bounding hand in hand, man linked to man,
Yelling their uncouth dirge, long daunced the kirtled clan.°

LXXII

Childe Harold at a little distance stood
And viewed, but not displeased, the revelrie,
Nor hated harmless mirth, however rude:
In sooth, it was no vulgar sight to see
Their barbarous, yet their not indecent, glee;
And, as the flames along their faces gleamed,
Their gestures nimble, dark eyes flashing free,
The long wild locks that to their girdles streamed,
While thus in concert they this lay half sang, half screamed:° —

I

Tambourgi! Tambourgi!° thy 'larum afar
Gives hope to the valiant, and promise of war;
All the sons of the mountains arise at the note,
Chimariot,° Illyrian, and dark Suliote!

II

Oh, who is more brave than a dark Suliote,
In his snowy camese and his shaggy capote?
To the wolf and the vulture he leaves his wild flock,
And descends to the plain like the stream from the rock.

III

Shall the sons of Chimari, who never forgive
The fault of a friend, bid an enemy live?
Let those guns so unerring such vengeance forego?
What mark is so fair as the breast of a foe?

IV

Macedonia sends forth her invincible race;
For a time they abandon the cave and the chase:

But those scarfs of blood-red shall be redder, before
The sabre is sheathed and the battle is o'er.

V

Then the pirates of Parga that dwell by the waves,
And teach the pale Franks what it is to be slaves,
Shall leave on the beach the long galley and oar,
And track to his covert the captive on shore.

VI

I ask not the pleasures that riches supply;
My sabre shall win what the feeble must buy,
Shall win the young bride with her long flowing hair,
And many a maid from her mother shall tear.

VII

I love the fair face of the maid in her youth,
Her caresses shall lull me, her music shall soothe;
Let her bring from the chamber her many-toned lyre,
And sing us a song on the fall of her sire.

VIII

Remember the moment when Previsa fell,°
The shrieks of the conquered, the conquerors' yell;
The roofs that we fired, and the plunder we shared,
The wealthy we slaughtered, the lovely we spared.

IX

I talk not of mercy, I talk not of fear;
He neither must know who would serve the Vizier:
Since the days of our prophet the Crescent ne'er saw
A chief ever glorious like Ali Pashaw.

X

Dark Muchtar his son to the Danube is sped,
Let the yellow-haired Giaours° view his horsetail° with dread;
When his Delhis come dashing in blood o'er the banks
How few shall escape from the Muscovite ranks!

XI

Selictar! unsheathe then our chief's scimitar:
Tambourgi! thy 'larum gives promise of war.
Ye mountains, that see us descend to the shore,
Shall view us as victors, or view us no more!

LXXIII

Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth!°
Immortal, though no more; though fallen, great!
Who now shall lead thy scattered children forth,
And long accustomed bondage uncreate?
Not such thy sons who whilome did await,
The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,
In bleak Thermopylæ's sepulchral strait —
Oh! who that gallant spirit shall resume,
Leap from Eurotas' banks, and call thee from the tomb?

LXXIV

Spirit of freedom! when on Phyle's brow°
Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train,
Couldst thou forebode the dismal hour which now
Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain?
Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,
But every carle can lord it o'er thy land;
Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,
Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand;
From birth till death enslaved; in word, in deed unmanned.

LXXV

In all save form alone, how changed! and who
That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye,
Who but would deem their bosoms burned anew
With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty!
And many dream withal the hour is nigh
That gives them back their father's heritage:
For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,
Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,
Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's mournful page.

LXXVI

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not
Who would be free themselves must strike the blow?
By their right arms the conquest must be wrought?
Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye?° no!
True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
But not for you will Freedom's altars flame.
Shades of the Helots!° triumph o'er your foe!
Greece! change thy lords, thy state is still the same;
Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thy years of shame.

LXXVII

The city° won for Allah from the Giaour,°
The Giaour from Othman's race° again may wrest;
And the Serai's impenetrable tower°
Receive the fiery Frank her former guest;
Or Wahab's rebel brood° who dared divest
The prophet's tomb of all its pious spoil,
May wind their path of blood along the West;
But ne'er will freedom seek this fated soil,
But slave succeed to slave through years of endless toil.

LXXVIII

Yet mark their mirth — ere lenten days begin,
That penance which their holy rites prepare
To shrive from man his weight of mortal sin,
By daily abstinence and nightly prayer;
But ere his sackcloth garb Repentance wear,
Some days of joyaunce are decreed to all,
To take of pleasaunce each his secret share,
In motley robe to dance at masking ball,
And join the mimic train of merry Carnival.

LXXIX

And whose more rife with merriment than thine,
Oh Stamboul! once the empress of their reign?
Though turbans now pollute Sophia's shrine,
And Greece her very altars eyes in vain: —
Alas! her woes will still pervade my strain! —
Gay were her minstrels once, for free her throng,
All felt the common joy they now must feign,
Nor oft I've seen such sight, nor heard such song,
As wooed the eye, and thrilled the Bosphorus along.

LXXX

Loud was the lightsome tumult on the shore;
Oft Music changed, but never ceased her tone,
And timely echoed back the measured oar,
And rippling waters made a pleasant moan:
The Queen of tides on high consenting shone,
And when a transient breeze swept o'er the wave,
'Twas, as if darting from her heavenly throne,
A brighter glance her form reflected gave,
Till sparkling billows seemed to light the banks they lave.

LXXXI

Glanced many a light caïque along the foam,
Danced on the shore the daughters of the land,
Ne thought had man or maid of rest or home,
While many a languid eye and thrilling hand
Exchanged the look few bosoms may withstand,
Or gently prest, returned the pressure still:
Oh Love! young Love! bound in thy rosy band,
Let sage or cynic prattle as he will,
These hours, and only these, redeem Life's years of ill!

LXXXII

But, midst the throng in merry masquerade,
Lurk there no hearts that throb with secret pain,
Even through the closest searment half betrayed?
To such the gentle murmurs of the main
Seem to re-echo all they mourn in vain;
To such the gladness of the gamesome crowd
Is source of wayward thought and stern disdain:
How do they loathe the laughter idly loud,
And long to change the robe of revel for the shroud!

LXXXIII

This must he feel, the true-born son of Greece,
If Greece one true-born patriot still can boast:
Not such as prate of war, but skulk in peace,
The bondsman's peace, who sighs for all he lost,
Yet with smooth smile his tyrant can accost,
And wield the slavish sickle, not the sword:
Ah! Greece! they love thee least who owe thee most —
Their birth, their blood, and that sublime record
Of hero sires, who shame thy now degenerate horde!

LXXXIV

When riseth Lacedemon's hardihood,°
When Thebes Epaminondas rears again,
When Athens' children are with hearts endued,
When Grecian mothers shall give birth to men,
Then mayst thou be restored, but not till then.
A thousand years scarce serve to form a state;
An hour may lay it in the dust: and when
Can man its shattered splendour renovate,
Recall its virtues back, and vanquish Time and Fate?

LXXXV

And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,°
Land of lost gods and godlike men, art thou!
Thy vales of evergreen, thy hills of snow,
Proclaim thee Nature's varied favourite now:
Thy fanes, thy temples to thy surface bow,
Commingling slowly with heroic earth,
Broke by the share of every rustic plough:
So perish monuments of mortal birth,
So perish all in turn, save well-recorded Worth;

LXXXVI

Save where some solitary column mourns
Above its prostrate brethren of the cave;
Save where Tritonia's airy shrine° adorns
Colonna's cliff, and gleams along the wave;
Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten grave,
Where the gray stones and unmolested grass
Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave;
While strangers only not regardless pass,
Lingering like me, perchance, to gaze and sigh 'Alas!'

LXXXVII

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild ;
Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields,
Thine olive° ripe as when Minerva smiled,
And still his honied wealth Hymettus yields ;°
There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,
The freeborn wanderer of thy mountain-air ;
Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds,
Still in his beam Mendeli's marbles° glare ;
Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still is fair.

LXXXVIII

Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground ;
No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon ;
Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
Defies the power which crushed thy temples gone :
Age shakes Athena's tower,° but spares gray Marathon.°

LXXXIX

The sun, the soil, but not the slave, the same ;
Unchanged in all except its foreign lord,
Preserves alike its bounds and boundless fame
The Battle-field where Persia's victim horde
First bowed beneath the brunt of Hellas' sword,
As on the morn to distant Glory dear,
When Marathon became a magic word ;
Which uttered, to the hearer's eye appear
The camp, the host, the fight, the conqueror's career.

XC

The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow;
The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear;
Mountains above,° Earth's, Ocean's plain below:
Death in the front, Destruction in the rear!
Such was the scene — what now remaineth here?
What sacred trophy marks the hallowed ground,
Recording Freedom's smile and Asia's tear?
The rifled urn, the violated mound,
The dust thy courser's hoof, rude stranger! spurns around.

XCI

Yet to the remnants of thy splendour past°
Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied, throng;
Long shall the voyager, with the Ionian blast,
Hail the bright clime of battle and of song;
Long shall thine annals and immortal tongue
Fill with thy fame the youth of many a shore;
Boast of the aged! lesson of the young!
Which sages venerate and bards adore,
As Pallas and the Muse unveiled their awful lore.

XCII

The parted bosom clings to wonted home,°
If aught that's kindred cheer the welcome hearth;
He that is lonely, hither let him roam,
And gaze complacent on congenial earth.
Greece is no lightsome land of social mirth:
But he whom Sadness sootheth may abide,
And scarce regret the region of his birth,
When wandering slow by Delphi's sacred side,
Or gazing o'er the plains where Greek and Persian died.

XCIII

Let such approach this consecrated land
And pass in peace along the magic waste;
But spare its relics — let no busy hand
Deface the scenes, already how defaced!
Not for such purpose were these altars placed:
Revere the remnants nations once revered:
So may our country's name be undisgraced,
So mayst thou prosper where thy youth was reared,
By every honest joy of love and life endeared!

XCIV

For thee, who thus in too protracted song
Hast soothed thine idlesse with inglorious lays,°
Soon shall thy voice be lost amid the throng
Of louder minstrels in these later days:
To such resign the strife for fading bays —
Ill may such contest now the spirit move
Which heeds nor keen reproach nor partial praise,
Since cold each kinder heart that might approve,
And none are left to please when none are left to love.

XCV

Thou too art gone, thou loved and lovely one!
Whom youth and youth's affections bound to me;
Who did for me what none beside have done,
Nor shrank from one albeit unworthy thee.
What is my being? thou hast ceased to be!
Nor staid to welcome here thy wanderer home,
Who mourns o'er hours which we no more will see —
Would they had never been, or were to come!
Would he had ne'er returned to find fresh cause to roam!

XCVI

Oh! ever loving, lovely, and beloved!
How selfish Sorrow ponders on the past,
And clings to thoughts now better far removed!
But time shall tear thy shadow from me last.
All thou couldst have of mine, stern Death! thou hast;
The parent, friend, and now the more than friend:°
Ne'er yet for one thine arrows flew so fast,
And grief with grief continuing still to blend,
Hath snatched the little joy that life had yet to lend.

XCVII

Then must I plunge again into the crowd,
And follow all that Peace disdains to seek?
Where Revel calls, and Laughter, vainly loud,
False to the heart, distorts the hollow cheek,
To leave the flagging spirit doubly weak;
Still o'er the features, which perforce they cheer,
To feign the pleasure or conceal the pique?
Smiles from the channel of a future tear,
Or raise the writhing lip with ill-dissembled sneer.

XCVIII

What is the worst of woes that wait on age?°
What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?
To view each loved one blotted from life's page,
And be alone on earth, as I am now.
Before the Chastener humbly let me bow,
O'er hearts divided and o'er hopes destroyed:
Roll on, vain days! full reckless may ye flow,
Since time hath reft whate'er my soul enjoyed,
And with the ills of Eld mine earlier years alloyed.

CANTO THIRD

I

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child!
Ada! sole daughter of my house and heart?°
When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,
And then we parted, — not as now we part,
But with a hope. —
Awaking with a start,
The waters heave around me; and on high
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,
Whither I know not; but the hour's gone by,
When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad mine eye.

II

Once more upon the waters! yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed°
That knows his rider. Welcome, to the roar!
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!
Though the strained mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on ocean's foam to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

III

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,
The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind;°
Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards: in that Tale I find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life, — where not a flower appears.

IV

Since my young days of passion — joy, or pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,
And both may jar: it may be, that in vain
I would essay as I have sung to sing.
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;
So that it wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief or gladness — so it fling
Forgetfulness around me — it shall seem
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme.

V

He, who grown aged in this world of woe,°
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,
So that no wonder waits him; nor below
Can love or sorrow, fame, ambition, strife,
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife
Of silent, sharp endurance: he can tell
Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves, yet rife
With airy images, and shapes which dwell
Still unimpaired, though old, in the soul's haunted cell.

VI

'Tis to create, and in creating live
A being more intense, that we endow
With form our fancy, gaining as we give
The life we image, even as I do now.
What am I? Nothing; but not so art thou,
Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse earth,
Invisible but gazing, as I glow
Mixed with thy spirit, blended with thy birth,
And feeling still with thee in my crushed feelings' dearth.

VII

Yet must I think less wildly: — I *have* thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame;
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poisoned.° 'Tis too late!
Yet am I changed; though still enough the same
In strength to bear what time can not abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing Fate.°

VIII

Something too much of this: — but now 'tis past,
And the spell closes with its silent seal.
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last;
He of the breast which fain no more would feel,
Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but ne'er heal;°
Yet Time, who changes all, had altered him
In soul and aspect as in age: years steal
Fire from the mind as vigour from the limb;
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.

IX

His had been quaffed too quickly, and he found
The dregs were wormwood; but he filled again,
And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
And deemed its spring perpetual; but in vain!
Still round him clung invisibly a chain
Which galled for ever, fettering though unseen,
And heavy though it clanked not; worn with pain,
Which pined although it spoke not, and grew keen,
Entering with every step he took through many a scene.

X

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mixed
Again in fancied safety with his kind,
And deemed his spirit now so firmly fixed
And sheathed with an invulnerable mind,
That, if no joy, no sorrow lurked behind;
And he, as one, might 'midst the many stand
Unheeded, searching through the crowd to find
Fit speculation; such as in strange land
He found in wonder-works of God and Nature's hand.°

XI

But who can view the ripened rose, nor seek
To wear it? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of Beauty's cheek,
Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?
Who can contemplate Fame through clouds unfold
The star which rises o'er her steep, nor climb?
Harold, once more within the vortex, rolled
On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's fond prime.

XII

But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with man; with whom he held
Little in common; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul was quelled
In youth by his own thoughts; still uncompelled,
He would not yield dominion of his mind
To spirits against whom his own rebelled;
Proud though in desolation; which could find
A life within itself, to breathe without mankind.°

XIII

Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends;
Where rolled the ocean, thereon was his home;
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the tome
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
For Nature's pages glassed by sunbeams on the lake.°

XIV

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings bright
As their own beams; and earth, and earth-born jars,
And human frailties were forgotten quite:
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight
He had been happy; but this clay will sink
Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the link
That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its brink.°

XV

But in man's dwellings he became a thing
Restless and worn, and stern and wearisome,
Drooped as a wild-born falcon with clipt wing,
To whom the boundless air alone were home:
Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,
As eagerly the barred-up bird will beat
His breast and beak against his wiry dome
Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the heat
Of his impeded soul would through his bosom eat.

XVI

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
With nought of hope left, but with less of gloom;
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made Despair a smilingness assume,
Which, though 'twere wild, — as on the plundered wreck
When mariners would madly meet their doom
With draughts intemperate on the sinking deck, —
Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to check.°

XVII

Stop! — for thy tread is on an Empire's dust! °
An earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!
Is the spot marked with no colossal bust? °
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None; but the moral's truth tells simpler so,
As the ground was before, thus let it be;
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
And is this all the world has gained by thee,
Thou first and last of fields! king-making Victory.

XVIII

And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,
The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!
How in an hour the power which gave annuls
Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!
In 'pride of place'° here last the eagle flew,
Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through;
Ambition's life and labours all were vain;
He wears the shattered links of the world's broken chain.

XIX

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit°
And foam in fetters, — but is Earth more free?
Did nations combat to make *One* submit;
Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty?
What! shall reviving Thraldom again be
The patched-up idol° of enlightened days?
Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall we
Pay the Wolf homage? proffering lowly gaze
And servile knees to thrones? No; *prove* before ye praise.

XX

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no more!
In vain fair cheeks were furrowed with hot tears
For Europe's flowers° long rooted up before
The trampler of her vineyards; in vain years
Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
Have all been borne, and broken by the accord
Of roused-up millions; all that most endears
Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a sword°
Such as Harmodius drew on Athens' tyrant lord.

XXI

There was a sound of revelry by night,°
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

XXII

Did ye not hear it? — No; 'twas but the wind
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet —
But hark! — that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! Arm! it is — it is — the cannon's opening roar!

XXIII

Within a windowed niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain;° he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deemed it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretched his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell;
He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

XXIV

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!

XXV

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips — 'The foe! They come! they come!'

XXVI

And wild and high the 'Cameron's gathering'° rose,
The war-note of Lochiel,° which Albyn's hills°
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes!
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears!°

XXVII

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,°
Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave, — alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

XXVIII

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms, — the day
Battle's magnificently-stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
Rider and horse, — friend, foe, — in one red burial blent!

XXIX

Their praise is hymned by loftier harps than mine;°
Yet one I would select from that proud throng,
Partly because they blend me with his line,
And partly that I did his sire some wrong,
And partly that bright names will hallow song;
And his was of the bravest, and when showered
The death-bolts deadliest the thinned files along,
Even where the thickest of war's tempest lowered,
They reached no nobler breast than thine, young gallant Howard!°

XXX

There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,°
And mine were nothing, had I such to give;
But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,°
Which living waves where thou didst cease to live,
And saw around me the wide field revive
With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring
Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
I turned from all she brought to those she could not bring.

XXXI

I turned to thee, to thousands, of whom each
And one as all a ghastly gap did make
In his own kind and kindred, whom to teach
Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's, must awake
Those whom they thirst for; though the sound of Fame
May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
The fever of vain longing, and the name
So honoured but assumes a stronger, bitterer claim.

XXXII

They mourn, but smile at length; and, smiling, mourn:
The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn;
The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the hall
In massy hoariness; the ruined wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone;
The bars survive the captive they enthral:
The day drags through, though storms keep out the sun;
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on:

XXXIII

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies; and makes
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more it breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
Living in shattered guise; and still, and cold,
And bloodless with its sleepless sorrow aches,
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign, for such things are untold.

XXXIV

There is a very life in our despair.
Vitality of poison,° — a quick root
Which feeds these deadly branches; for it were
As nothing did we die; but Life will suit°
Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,
Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore,
All ashes to the taste. Did man compute
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er
Such hours 'gainst years of life, say, would he name threescore?

XXXV

The Psalmist numbered out the years of man:
They are enough; and if thy tale be *true*,
Thou who didst grudge him even that fleeting span,
More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo!
Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
Their children's lips shall echo them, and say —
'Here, where the sword united nations drew,
Our countrymen were warring on that day!'
And this is much, and all which will not pass away.°

XXXVI

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men,°
Whose spirit, antithetically mixt,
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixed;
Extreme in all things! hadst thou been betwixt
Thy throne had still been thine, or never been;
For daring made thy rise as fall: thou seek'st
Even now to reassume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the Thunderer of the scene!

XXXVII

Conqueror and captive of the earth art thou!
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name
Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds than now
That thou art nothing, save the jest of fame,
Who wooed thee once, thy vassal, and became
The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert
A god unto thyself; nor less the same
To the astounded kingdoms all inert
Who deemed thee for a time whate'er thou didst assert.

XXXVIII

Oh, more or less than man — in high or low,
Battling with nations, flying from the field;
Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now
More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield;
An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skilled,
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,
Nor learn that tempted fate will leave the loftiest star.

XXXIX

Yet well thy soul hath brooked the turning tide
With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which,° be it wisdom, coldness, or deep pride,
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smiled
With a sedate and all-enduring eye; —
When fortune fled her spoiled and favourite child,
He stood unbowed beneath the ills upon him piled.

XL

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them
Ambition steeled thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn, which could contemn
Men and their thoughts; 'twas wise to feel, not so
To wear° it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to use
Till they were turned unto thine overthrow;
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose.

XLI

If, like a tower upon a headlong rock,
Thou hast been made to stand or fall alone,
Such scorn of man had helped to brave the shock;
But men's thoughts were the steps which paved thy throne,
Their admiration thy best weapon shone;
The part of Philip's son was thine, not then —
Unless aside thy purple had been thrown —
Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;
For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den.°

XLII

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,
And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a fire
And motion of the soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore,
Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

XLIII

This makes the madmen who have made men mad
By their contagion; conquerors and kings,
Founders of sects and systems, to whom add
Sophists, bards, statesmen, all unquiet things
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they fool;
Envied, yet how unenviable! what stings
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a school
Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule:

XLIV

Their breath is agitation, and their life
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,
And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,
That should their days, surviving perils past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die;
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
With its own flickering, or a sword laid by
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

XLV

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.
Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,
And far *beneath* the earth and ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

XLVI

Away with these! true Wisdom's world will be
Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal Nature! ° for who teems like thee,
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?
There Harold gazes on a work divine,
A blending of all beauties; streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine,
And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin greenly dwells.

XLVII

And there they stand, as stands a lofty mind,
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
All tenantless, save to the crannying wind,
Or holding dark communion with the cloud.
There was a day when they were young and proud;
Banners on high, and battles passed below;
But they who fought are in a bloody shroud,
And those which waved are shredless dust ere now,
And the bleak battlements shall bear no future blow.

XLVIII

Beneath these battlements, within those walls,
Power dwelt amidst her passions; in proud state
Each robber chief upheld his armed halls,
Doing his evil will, nor less elate
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.
What want these outlaws conquerors should have
But history's purchased page to call them great?
A wider space, an ornamented grave?
Their hopes were not less warm, their souls were full as brave.

XLIX

In their baronial feuds and single fields,
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!°
And Love, which lent a blazon to their shields,
With emblems well devised by amorous pride,
Through all the mail of iron hearts would glide;
But still their flame was fierceness, and drew on
Keen contest and destruction near allied,
And many a tower for some fair mischief won,
Saw the discoloured Rhine beneath its ruin run.

L

But thou, exulting and abounding river!
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
Through banks whose beauty would endure for ever
Could man but leave thy bright creation so,
Nor its fair promise from the surface mow
With the sharp scythe of conflict, — then to see
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
Earth paved like heaven; and to seem such to me
Even now what wants thy stream? — that it should Lethe be.

LI

A thousand battles have assailed thy banks,
But these and half their fame have passed away,
And Slaughter heaped on high his weltering ranks;
Their very graves are gone, and what are they?
Thy tide washed down the blood of yesterday,
And all was stainless, and on thy clear stream
Glassed, with its dancing light, the sunny ray;
But o'er the blackened memory's blighting dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping as they seem.

LII

Thus Harold inly said, and passed along,
Yet not insensible to all which here
Awoke the jocund birds to early song
In glens which might have made even exile dear:
Though on his brow were graven lines austere
And tranquil sternness, which had ta'en the place
Of feelings fierier far but less severe,
Joy was not always absent from his face,
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with transient trace.

LIII

Nor was all love shut from him, though his days
Of passion had consumed themselves to dust.
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze
On such as smile upon us; the heart must
Leap kindly back to kindness, though disgust
Hath weened it from all worldlings: thus he felt,
For there was soft remembrance, and sweet trust°
In one fond breast, to which his own would melt,
And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom dwelt.

LIV

And he had learned to love,° — I know not why,
For this in such as him seems strange of mood, —
The helpless looks of blooming infancy,
Even in its earliest nurture ; what subdued,
To change like this, a mind so far imbued
With scorn of man, it little boots to know ;
But thus it was ; and though in solitude
Small power the nipped affections have to grow,
In him this glowed when all beside had ceased to glow.

LV

And there was one soft breast, as hath been said,
Which unto his was bound by stronger ties
Than the church links withal ; and, though unwed,
That love was pure, and, far above disguise,
Had stood the test of mortal enmities
Still undivided, and cemented more
By peril, dreaded most in female eyes ;
But this was firm, and from a foreign shore
Well to that heart might his these absent greetings pour !

I

The castled crag of Drachenfels°
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossomed trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scattered cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strewed a scene, which I should see
With double joy wert *thou* with me.

II

And peasant girls with dark blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of gray;
And many a rock which steeply lowers,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;
But one thing want these banks of Rhine, —
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mind!

III

I send the lilies given to me;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must withered be,
But yet reject them not as such;
For I have cherished them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gathered by the Rhine,
And offered from my heart to thine!

IV

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round:
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
Through life to dwell delighted here;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

LVI

By Coblentz, on a rise of gentle ground,
There is a small and simple pyramid,
Crowning the summit of the verdant mound;
Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,°
Our enemy's — but let not that forbid
Honour to Marceau! o'er whose early tomb
Tears, big tears, gushed from the rough soldier's lid,
Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
Falling for France, whose rights he battled to resume.

LVII

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career, —
His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes;
And fitly may the stranger lingering here
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;
For he was Freedom's champion, one of those,
The few in number, who had o'erstept
The charter to chastise, which she bestows
On such as wield her weapons: he had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.

LVIII

Here Ehrenbreitstein,° with her shattered wall
Black with the miner's blast, upon her height
Yet shows of what she was, when shell and ball
Rebounding idly on her strength did light:
A tower of victory! from whence the flight
Of baffled foes was watched along the plain:
But Peace destroyed what War could never blight,
And laid those proud roofs bare to Summer's rain —
On which the iron shower for years had poured in vain.

LIX

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long delighted
The stranger fain would linger on his way!
Thine is a scene alike where souls united
Or lonely Contemplation thus might stray;
And could the ceaseless vulture cease to prey
On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,
Where Nature, nor too sombre nor too gay,
Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,
Is to the mellow earth as Autumn to the year.

LX

Adieu to thee, again! a vain adieu!
There can be no farewell to scene like thine;°
The mind is coloured by thy every hue;
And if reluctantly the eyes resign
Their cherished gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine!
'Tis with the thankful glance of parting praise;
More mighty spots may rise — more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attaching maze
The brilliant, fair, and soft, — the glories of old days.

LXI

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,
The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls between,
The wild rocks shaped, as they had turrets been,
In mockery of man's art; and these withal
A race of faces happy as the scene,
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
Still springing o'er thy banks, though empires near them fall.

LXII

But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls°
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche° — the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How earth may pierce to heaven, yet leave vain man below.

LXIII

But ere these matchless heights I dare to scan,
There is a spot should not be passed in vain, —
Morat! ° the proud, the patriot field! where man
May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
Nor blush for those who conquered on that plain;
Here Burgundy bequeathed his tombless host,
A bony heap, through ages to remain,
Themselves their monument; — the Stygian coast
Unsepulchred they roamed, and shrieked each wandering ghost.

LXIV

While Waterloo with Cannæ's carnage° vies,
Morat and Marathon twin names shall stand;
They were true Glory's stainless victories,
Won by the unambitious heart and hand
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,
All unbought champions in no princely cause
Of vice-entailed Corruption; they no land
Doomed to bewail the blasphemy of laws
Making kings' rights divine, by some Draconic° clause.

LXV

By a lone wall a lonelier column° rears
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old days;
'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of years,
And looks as with the wild bewildered gaze
Of one to stone converted by amaze,
Yet still with consciousness; and there it stands
Making a marvel that it not decays,
When the coeval pride of human hands,
Levelled Aventicum, hath strewed her subject lands.

LXVI

And there — O, sweet and sacred be the name! —
Julia° — the daughter, the devoted — gave
Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath a claim
Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's grave.
Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers would crave
The life she lived in; but the judge was just,
And then she died on him she could not save.
Their tomb was simple, and without a bust,
And held within their urn, one mind, one heart, one dust.

LXVII

But these are deeds which should not pass away.
And names that must not wither, though the earth
Forgets her empires with a just decay,
The enslavers and the enslaved, their death and birth;
The high, the mountain-majesty of worth
Should be, and shall, survivor of its woe,
And from its immortality look forth
In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,
Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

LXVIII

Lake Leman woos me with its crystal face,
The mirror where the stars and mountains view
The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue:
There is too much of man here, to look through
With a fit mind the might which I behold;
But soon in me shall loneliness renew
Thoughts hid, but not less cherished than of old,
Ere mingling with the herd had penned me in their fold.

LXIX

To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind;
All are not fit with them to stir and toil.
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
In the hot throng, where we become the spoil
Of our infection, till too late and long
We may deplore and struggle with the coil,
In wretched interchange of wrong for wrong
Midst a contentious world, striving where none are strong.

LXX

There, in a moment, we may plunge our years
In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own soul turn all our blood to tears,
And colour things to come with hues of Night;
The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness: on the sea,
The boldest steer but where their ports invite;
But there are wanderers o'er Eternity
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchor'd ne'er shall be.

LXXI

Is it not better, then, to be alone,°
And love Earth only for its earthly sake?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake; —
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
Than join the crushing crowd, doomed to inflict or bear?

LXXII

I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me; and to me
High mountains are a feeling,° but the hum
Of human cities torture; I can see
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Classed among creatures, when the soul can flee,
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

LXXIII

And thus I am absorbed, and this is life;
I look upon the peopled desert past,
As on a place of agony and strife,
Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was cast,
To act and suffer, but remount at last
With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring,
Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the blast
Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,
Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being cling.

LXXIV

And when, at length, the mind shall be all free°
From what it hates in this degraded form,
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
Existent happier in the fly and worm, —
When elements to elements conform,
And dust is as it should be, shall I not
Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each spot?
Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot?

LXXV

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part
Of me and of my soul, as I of them?°
Is not the love of these deep in my heart
With a pure passion? should I not contemn
All objects, if compared with these? and stem
A tide of suffering, rather than forego
Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm
Of those whose eyes are only turned below,
Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not glow?

LXXVI

But this is not my theme; and I return
To that which is immediate, and require
Those who find contemplation in the urn,
To look on One° whose dust was once all fire,
A native of the land where I respire
The clear air for a while — a passing guest,
Where he became a being, — whose desire
Was to be glorious; 'twas a foolish quest,
The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all rest.

LXXVII

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,°
The apostle of affliction, he who threw
Enchantment over passion, and from woe
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew
The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew
How to make madness beautiful, and cast
O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue
Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past
The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

LXXVIII

His love was passion's essence: — as a tree
On fire by lightning, with ethereal flame
Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be
Thus, and enamoured, were in him the same.
But his was not the love of living dame
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal beauty, which became
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
Along his burning page, distempered though it seems.

LXXIX

This breathed itself to life in Julie,° *this*
Invested her with all that's wild and sweet;
This hallowed, too, the memorable kiss°
Which every morn his fevered lip would greet,
From hers, who but with friendship his would meet;
But to that gentle touch, through brain and breast
Flashed the thrilled spirit's love-devouring heat;
In that absorbing sigh perchance more blest
Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek possest.

LXXX

His life was one long war with self-sought foes,
Or friends by him self-banished; for his mind
Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary,° and chose,
For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind,
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind,
But he was phrensied, — wherefore, who may know?
Since cause might be which skill could never find;
But he was phrensied by disease or woe,
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show.

LXXXI

For then he was inspired, and from him came,
As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,
Those oracles° which set the world in flame,
Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more,
Did he not this for France? which lay before
Bowed to the inborn tyranny of years?
Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,
Till by the voice of him and his compeers,
Roused up to too much wrath, which follows o'ergrown fears?

LXXXII

They made themselves a fearful monument!
The wreck of old opinions — things which grew,
Breathed from the birth of time: the veil they rent,
And what behind it lay all earth shall view.
But good with ill they also overthrew,
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild
Upon the same foundation, and renew
Dungeons and thrones, which the same hour refilled,
As heretofore, because ambition was self-willed.

LXXXIII

But this will not endure, nor be endured!
Mankind have felt their strength, and made it felt.
They might have used it better, but, allured
By their new vigour, sternly have they dealt
On one another; Pity ceased to melt
With her once natural charities. — But they,
Who in oppression's darkness caved had dwelt,
They were not eagles, nourished with the day;
What marvel then, at times, if they mistook their prey?

LXXXIV

What deep wounds ever closed without a scar?
The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to wear
That which disfigures it; and they who war
With their own hopes, and have been vanquished, bear
Silence, but not submission: in his lair
Fixed Passion holds his breath, until the hour
Which shall atone for years; none need despair:
It came, it cometh, and will come, — the power
To punish or forgive — in *one* we shall be slower.

LXXXV

Clear, placid Leman! [°] thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

LXXXVI

It is the hush of night,° and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darkened Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more:

LXXXVII

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

LXXXVIII

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires, — 'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life have named themselves a star.

LXXXIX

All heaven and earth are still° — though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep: —
All heaven and earth are still: From the high host
Of stars, to the lulled lake and mountain-coast,
All is concentered in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

XC

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt,
And purifies from self: it is a tone,
The soul and source of music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
Binding all things with beauty; — 'twould disarm
The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

XCI

Not vainly did the early Persian° make
His altar the high places, and the peak
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwalled temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,
Upreared of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer!

XCII

The sky is changed! — and such a change! Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak,° the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

XCIII

And this is in the night: — Most glorious night!° 870
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight, —
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth! 875
And now again 'tis black, — and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

XCIV

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted 880
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted!
Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed: — 885
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters, — war within themselves to wage: —

XCV

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand:
For here, not one, but many, make their play,
And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,
Flashing and cast around: of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills hath forked
His lightnings, — as if he did understand,
That in such gaps as desolation worked,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurked.

XCVI

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings,° ye,
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices, is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless, — if I rest.
But where of you, O tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

XCVII

Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me, — could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak.
All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe — into *one* word,
And that one word were lightning, I would speak;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.°

XCVIII

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
With breath all incense,° and with cheek all bloom,
Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn,
And living as if earth contained no tomb, —
And glowing into day: we may resume
The march of our existence: and thus I,
Still on thy shores, fair Leman, may find room
And food for meditation, nor pass by
Much, that may give us pause, if pondered fittingly.

XCIX

Clarens, sweet Clarens,° birthplace of deep love!
Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought;
Thy trees take root in Love; the snows above
The very Glaciers have his colours caught,
And sun-set into rose-hues sees them wrought
By rays which sleep there lovingly: the rocks,
The permanent crags, tell here of Love, who sought
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,
Which stir and sting the soul with hope that woos, then mocks.

C

Clarens, by heavenly feet thy paths are trod, —
Undying Love's, who here ascends a throne
To which the steps are mountains; where the god
Is a pervading life and light, — so shown
Not on those summits solely, nor alone
In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath blown,
His soft and summer breath, whose tender power
Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate hour.

CI

All things are here of *him;* from the black pines,
Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines
Which slope his green path downward to the shore,
Where the bowed waters meet him, and adore,
Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the wood,
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,
But light leaves, young as joy, stands where it stood,
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude.

CII

A populous solitude of bees and birds,
And fairy-formed and many-coloured things,
Who worship him with notes more sweet than words,
And innocently open their glad wings,
Fearless and full of life: the gush of springs,
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend
Of stirring branches, and the bud which brings
The swiftest thought of beauty, here extend,
Mingling, and made by Love, unto one mighty end.

CIII

He who hath loved not, here would learn that lore,
And make his heart a spirit; ° he who knows
That tender mystery, will love the more;
For this is Love's recess, where vain men's woes,
And the world's waste, have driven him far from those,
For 'tis his nature to advance or die;
He stands not still, but or decays, or grows
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie
With the immortal lights, in its eternity!

CIV

'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau this spot,
Peopling it with affections; but he found
It was the scene which passion must allot
To the mind's purified beings; 'twas the ground
Where early Love his Psyche's zone unbound
And hallowed it with loveliness; 'tis lone,
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a sound,
And sense, and sight of sweetness; here the Rhone
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have reared a throne.

CV

Lausanne, and Ferney! ° ye have been the abodes
Of names which unto you bequeathed a name;
Mortals, who sought and found, by dangerous roads,
A path to perpetuity of fame:
They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts° to pile
Thoughts which should call down thunder, and the flame
Of Heaven again assailed, if Heaven the while
On man and man's research could deign do more than smile.

CVI

The one° was fire and fickleness, a child
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
A wit as various; — gay, grave, sage, or wild, —
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined;
He multiplied himself among mankind,
The Proteus of their talents: But his own
Breathed most in ridicule, — which, as the wind,
Blew where it listed, laying all things prone, —
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne.

CVII

The other,° deep and slow, exhausting thought,
And hiving wisdom with each studious year,
In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,
And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;°
The lord of irony, — that master-spell,
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew from fear,
And doomed him to the zealot's ready hell,
Which answers to all doubts so eloquently well.

CVIII

Yet, peace be with their ashes, — for by them,
If merited, the penalty is paid;
It is not ours to judge, — far less condemn;
The hour must come when such things shall be made
Known unto all, or hope and dread allayed
By slumber, on one pillow, in the dust,
Which, thus much we are sure, must lie decayed;
And when it shall revive, as is our trust,
'Twill be to be forgiven, or suffer what is just.

CIX

But let me quit man's works, again to read
His Maker's, spread around me, and suspend
This page, which from my reveries I feed,
Until it seems prolonging without end.
The clouds above me to the white Alps tend,
And I must pierce them, and survey whate'er
May be permitted, as my steps I bend
To their most great and growing region, where
The earth to her embrace compels the powers of air.

CX

Italia,° too, Italia! looking on thee,
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won thee,
To the last halo of the chiefs and sages
Who glorify thy consecrated pages;
Thou wert the throne and grave of empires; still,
The fount at which the panting mind assuages
Her thirst, of knowledge, quaffing there her fill,
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's imperial hill.

CXI

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme
Renewed with no kind auspices: to feel
We are not what we have been, and to deem
We are not what we should be, and to steel
The heart against itself; and to conceal,
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or aught, —
Passion or feeling, purpose, grief, or zeal, —
Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,
Is a stern task of soul, — No matter, — it is taught.

CXII

And for these words, thus woven into song,
It may be that they are a harmless wile, —
The colouring of the scenes which fleet along,
Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile
My breast, or that of others, for a while.
Fame is the thirst of youth, but I am not
So young as to regard men's frown or smile,
As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot;
I stood and stand alone, — remembered or forgot.

CXIII

I have not loved the world, nor the world me; °
I have not flattered its rank breath, nor bowed
To its idolatries a patient knee,
Nor coined my cheek to smiles, nor cried aloud
In worship of an echo; in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such; I stood
Among them, but not of them; in a shroud
Of thoughts which were not their thoughts, and still could,
Had I not filed my mind, which thus itself subdued.

CXIV

I have not loved the world, nor the world me, —
But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there may be
Words which are things, hopes which will not deceive,
And virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the failing, I would also deem
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve;
That two, or one, are almost what they seem,
That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.

CXV

My daughter! with thy name this song begun;
My daughter! with thy name thus much shall end;
I see thee not, I hear thee not, but none
Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the friend
To whom the shadows of far years extend:
Albeit my brow thou never should'st behold,°
My voice shall with thy future visions blend,
And reach into thy heart, when mine is cold,
A token and a tone, even from thy father's mould.

CXVI

To aid thy mind's development, to watch
Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see
Almost thy very growth, to view thee catch
Knowledge of objects, — wonders yet to thee!
To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's kiss, —
This, it should seem, was not reserved for me;
Yet this was in my nature: as it is
I know not what is there, yet something like to this.

CXVII

Yet, though dull hate as duty should be taught,
I know that thou wilt love me; though my name
Should be shut from thee, as a spell still fraught
With desolation, and a broken claim:
Though the grave closed between us,° — 'twere the same,
I know that thou wilt love me; though to drain
My blood from out thy being were an aim,
And an attainment, — all would be in vain, —
Still thou would'st love me, still that more than life retain.

CXVIII

The child of love, though born in bitterness,
And nurtured in convulsion. Of thy sire
These are the elements, and thine no less.
As yet such are around thee, but thy fire
Shall be more tempered, and thy hope far higher.
Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the sea
And from the mountains where I now respire,
Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,
As, with a sigh, I deem thou might'st have been to me!

CANTO FOURTH

I

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;°
A palace and a prison on each hand;
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Looked to the winged Lion's marble piles,°
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles.°

II

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers:
And such she was; — her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Poured in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deemed their dignity increased.

III

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,°
And silent rows the songless gondolier;
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear:
Those days are gone — but beauty still is here.
States fall, arts fade — but nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,°
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!

IV

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond —
Above the dogeless° city's vanished sway;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto;° Shylock and the Moor,°
And Pierre,° cannot be swept or worn away —
The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er —
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

V

The beings of the mind are not of clay;°
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence: that which Fate —
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied,
First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

VI

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,°
The first from hope, the last from vacancy;
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye:
Yet there are things whose strong reality
Outshines our fairy-land; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the Muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse:

VII

I saw or dreamed of such, — but let them go, —
They came like truth, and disappeared like dreams;
And whatsoe'er they were — are now but so:
I could replace them if I would; still teems
My mind with many a form which aptly seems
Such as I sought for, and at moments found; —
Let these too go — for waking reason deems
Such over-weening phantasies unsound,
And other voices speak, and other sights surround.

VIII

I've taught me other tongues,° and in strange eyes
Have made me not a stranger; to the mind —
Which is itself, no changes bring surprise;
Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find
A country with — ay, or without mankind:
Yet was I born where men are proud to be, —
Not without cause; and should I leave behind
The inviolate island of the sage and free,
And seek me out a home by a remoter sea?

IX

Perhaps I loved it well; and should I lay
My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
My spirit shall resume it — if we may
Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
My hopes of being remembered in my line
With my land's language: if too fond and far
These aspirations in their scope incline, —
If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar

X

My name from out the temple where the dead
Are honoured by the nations — let it be —
And light the laurels on a loftier head!
And be the Spartan's epitaph° on me —
'Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.'
Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need;
The thorns° which I have reaped are of the tree
I planted; they have torn me, and I bleed:
I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed.

XI

The spouseless Adriatic° mourns her lord;
And, annual marriage now no more renewed,
The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
Neglected garment of her widowhood!
St. Mark yet sees° his lion where he stood
Stand, but in mockery of his withered power,
Over the proud Place where an Emperor° sued,
And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
When Venice was a queen with an unequalled dower.

XII

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns° —
An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt;
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
Clank over sceptred cities; nations melt
From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
The sunshine for a while, and downward go
Like lauwine loosened from the mountain's belt;
Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo!°
Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe!

XIII

Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,°
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun;
But is not Doria's menace° come to pass?
Are they not *bridled?* — Venice, lost and won,
Her thirteen hundred years of freedom° done,
Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose!
Better be whelmed beneath the waves, and shun
Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

XIV

In youth she was all glory, — a new Tyre;
Her very by-word sprung from victory,
The 'Planter of the Lion,'° which through fire
And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea;
Though making many slaves, herself still free,
And Europe's bulwark° 'gainst the Ottomite;°
Witness Troy's rival, Candia!° Vouch it, ye
Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight!°
For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

XV

Statues of glass — all shivered — the long file
Of her dead Doges are declined to dust;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile°
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust;°
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
Have yielded to the stranger: empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects,° such as must
Too oft remind her who and what enthrals,
Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls.

XVI

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fettered thousands bore the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,°
Her voice their only ransom from afar:
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car
Of the o'ermastered victor stops, the reins
Fall from his hands, his idle scimitar
Starts from its belt — he rends his captive's chains,
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.

XVII

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine, —
Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,
Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,°
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot
Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot
Is shameful to the nations, most of all,
Albion!° to thee: the Ocean Queen should not
Abandon Ocean's children; in the fall
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

XVIII

I loved her from my boyhood; ° she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart,
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;
And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakspeare's art,°
Had stamped her image in me, and even so,
Although I found her thus, we did not part;
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

XIX

I can repeople with the past — and of
The present there is still for eye and thought,
And meditation chastened down, enough;
And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought;
And of the happiest moments which were wrought,
Within the web of my existence, some
From thee, fair Venice! have their colours caught:
There are some feelings time cannot benumb,
Nor Torture shake, or mine would now be cold and dumb.

XX

But from their nature will the tannen grow°
Loftiest on loftiest and least sheltered rocks,
Rooted in barrenness, where nought below
Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks
Of eddying storms; yet springs the trunk, and mocks
The howling tempest, till its height and frame
Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks
Of bleak, gray granite into life it came,
And grew a giant tree; — the mind may grow the same.

XXI

Existence may be borne, and the deep root
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
In bare and desolated bosoms; mute
The camel labours with the heaviest load,
And the wolf dies in silence, — not bestowed
In vain should such example be; if they,
Things of ignoble or of savage mood
Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
May temper it to bear, — it is but for a day.

XXII

All suffering doth destroy, or is destroyed,
Even by the sufferer; and, in each event,
Ends: — Some, with hope replenished and rebuoyed,
Return to whence they came — with like intent,
And weave their web again; some, bowed and bent,
Wax gray and ghastly, withering ere their time,
And perish with the reed on which they leant,
Some seek devotion, toil, war, good, or crime,
According as their souls were formed to sink or climb.

XXIII

But ever and anon of griefs subdued
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued;
And slight withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever: it may be a sound —
A tone of music — summer's eve — or spring —
A flower — the wind — the ocean — which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound;

XXIV

And how and why we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renewed, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,
Which out of things familiar, undesigned,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectres whom no exorcism can bind, —
The cold, the changed, perchance the dead — anew,
The mourned, the loved, the lost — too many! — yet how few!

XXV

But my soul wanders; I demand it back
To meditate amongst decay, and stand
A ruin amidst ruins; there to track
Fallen states and buried greatness, o'er a land
Which *was* the mightiest in its old command,
And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand;
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
The beautiful, the brave, the lords of earth and sea.

XXVI

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome!
And even since, and now, fair Italy!
Thou art the garden of the world, the home
Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
More rich than other climes' fertility;
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
With an immaculate charm which cannot be defaced.

XXVII

The moon is up, and yet it is not night; °
Sunset divides the sky with her; a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; ° Heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colours seems to be, —
Melted to one vast Iris of the West, —
Where the Day joins the past Eternity;
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
Floats through the azure air — an island of the blest!

XXVIII

A single star is at her side,° and reigns
With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but still
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
Rolled o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,
As Day and Night contending were, until
Nature reclaimed her order: gently flows
The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil
The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
Which streams upon her stream, and glassed within it glows,

XXIX

Filled with the face of heaven, which, from afar,
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:
And now they change; a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till — 'tis gone — and all is gray.

XXX

There is a tomb in Arqua ; ° — reared in air,
Pillared in their sarcophagus, repose
The bones of Laura's lover : ° here repair
Many familiar with his well-sung woes,
The pilgrims of his genius. He arose°
To raise a language, and his land reclaim°
From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes :
Watering the tree° which bears his lady's name
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

XXXI

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died ;
The mountain-village where his latter days
Went down the vale of years ; and 'tis their pride —
An honest pride — and let it be their praise,
To offer to the passing stranger's gaze
His mansion and his sepulchre ; ° both plain
And venerably simple, such as raise
A feeling more accordant with his strain°
Than if a pyramid formed his monumental fane.

XXXII

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt
Is one of that complexion which seems made
For those who their mortality have felt,
And sought a refuge from their hopes decayed
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
Which shows a distant prospect far away
Of busy cities, now in vain displayed,
For they can lure no further ; and the ray
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

XXXIII

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,
And shining in the brawling brook, where-by,
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours
With a calm languor, which, though to the eye
Idlesse it seem, hath its mortality.
If from society we learn to live,
'Tis solitude should teach us how to die;°
It hath no flatterers; vanity can give
No hollow aid; alone — man with his God must strive:

XXXIV

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair
The strength of better thoughts, and seek their prey
In melancholy bosoms, such as were
Of moody texture from their earliest day,
And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay
Deeming themselves predestined to a doom
Which is not of the pangs that pass away;
Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

XXXV

Ferrara! ° in thy wide and grass-grown streets,
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
There seems as 'twere a curse upon the seats
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood
Of Este,° which for many an age made good
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
Of petty power impelled, of those who wore°
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

XXXVI

And Tasso is their glory and their shame.°
Hark to his strain, and then survey his cell!
And see how dearly earned Torquato's fame,
And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell:
The miserable despot could not quell
The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend
With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell
Where he had plunged it. Glory without end
Scattered the clouds away; and on that name attend

XXXVII

The tears and praises of all time; while thine
Would rot in its oblivion — in the sink
Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line
Is shaken into nothing — but the link
Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think
Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn;
Alfonso, how thy ducal pageants shrink
From thee! if in another station born,
Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou mad'st to mourn:

XXXVIII

Thou, formed to eat, and be despised, and die,
Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou
Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty!
He, with a glory round his furrowed brow,
Which emanated then, and dazzles now,
In face of all his foes, the Cruscan squire,°
And Boileau,° whose rash envy could allow
No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
That whetstone of the teeth — monotony in wire!

XXXIX

Peace to Torquato's injured shade! 'twas his
In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
Aimed with her poisoned arrows, — but to miss.
Oh, victor unsurpassed in modern song!
Each year brings forth its millions; but how long
The tide of generations shall roll on,
And not the whole combined and countless throng
Compose a mind like thine! though all in one
Condensed their scattered rays, they would not form a sun.

XL

Great as thou art, yet paralleled by those,
Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,
The Bards of Hell and Chivalry:° first rose
The Tuscan father's comedy divine;
Then, not unequal to the Florentine,
The southern Scott,° the minstrel who called forth
A new creation with his magic line,
And, like the Ariosto of the North,°
Sang lady-love and war, romance and knightly worth.

XLI

The lightning° rent from Ariosto's bust
The iron crown of laurel's mimic'd leaves;
Nor was the ominous element unjust,
For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves
Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,
And the false semblance but disgraced his brow;
Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,
Know, that the lightning sanctifies below
Whate'er it strikes; — yon head is doubly sacred now.

XLII

Italia! oh Italia![°] thou who hast
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow ploughed by shame,
And annals graved in characters of flame.
Oh, God! that thou wert in thy nakedness
Less lovely or more powerful, and could claim
Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who press
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy distress;

XLIII

Then might'st thou more appal; or, less desired,
Be homely and be peaceful, undeplored
For thy destructive charms; then, still untired,
Would not be seen the armed torrents poured
Down the deep Alps; nor would the hostile horde!
Of many-nationed spoilers from the Po
Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's sword
Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
Victor or vanquished, thou the slave of friend or foe.

XLIV

Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him,
The Roman friend[°] of Rome's least-mortal mind,
The friend of Tully: as my bark did skim
The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,
Came Megara before me, and behind
Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
And Corinth on the left; I lay reclined
Along the prow, and saw all these unite
In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate sight;

XLV

For Time hath not rebuilt them, but upreared
Barbaric dwellings on their shattered site,
Which only make more mourned and more endeared
The few last rays of their far-scattered light,
And the crushed relics of their vanished might.
The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,
These sepulchres of cities, which excite
Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page
The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage.

XLVI

That page° is now before me, and on mine
His country's ruin added to the mass
Of perished states he mourned in their decline,
And I in desolation: all that *was*
Of then destruction *is*: and now, alas!
Rome — Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,
In the same dust and blackness, and we pass
The skeleton of her Titanic form,
Wrecks of another world, whose ashes still are warm.

XLVII

Yet, Italy, through every other land
Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side!
Mother of Arts! as once of arms; thy hand
Was then our guardian,° and is still our guide!
Parent of our Religion! whom the wide
Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven!
Europe, repentant of her parricide,
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,
Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

XLVIII

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
Where the Etrurian Athens° claims and keeps
A softer feeling for her fairy halls,
Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps°
To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps
Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,
And buried Learning rose, redeemed to a new morn.

XLIX

There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills
The air around with beauty; we inhale
The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils
Part of its immortality; the veil
Of heaven is half undrawn; within the pale
We stand, and in that form and face behold
What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail;
And to the fond idolaters of old
Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mould:

L

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
Reels with its fulness; there — for ever there —
Chained to the chariot of triumphal Art,
We stand as captives, and would not depart.
Away! — there need no words, nor terms precise,
The paltry jargon° of the marble mart,
Where Pedantry gulls Folly — we have eyes:
Blood, pulse, and breast confirm the Dardan Shepherd's prize.°

LI

Appearedst thou not to Paris in this guise?
Or the more deeply blest Anchises? ° or,
In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
Before thee thy own vanquished Lord of War,°
And gazing in thy face as toward a star,
Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
Feeding on thy sweet cheek! while thy lips are
With lava kisses melting while they burn,
Showered on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from an urn!

LII

Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love,
There full divinity inadequate
That feeling to express, or to improve,
The gods become as mortals, and man's fate°
Has moments like their brightest; but the weight
Of earth recoils upon us; let it go!
We can recall such visions, and create,
From what has been, or might be, things which grow
Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below.

LIII

I leave to learned fingers, and wise hands,
The artist and his ape,° to teach and tell
How well his connoisseurship understands
The graceful bend,° and the voluptuous swell:
Let these describe the undescribable:
I would not their vile breath should crisp the stream
Wherein that image shall for ever dwell:
The unruffled mirror of the loveliest dream
That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam.

LIV

In Santa Croce's holy precincts° lie
Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
Even in itself an immortality,
Though there were nothing save the past, and this,
The particle of those sublimities
Which have relapsed to chaos: here repose
Angelo's,° Alfieri's bones, and his,
The starry Galileo, with his woes;°
Here Machiavelli's° earth returned to whence it rose.

LV

These are four minds, which, like the elements,
Might furnish forth creation: — Italy!
Time, which hath wronged thee with ten thousand rents
Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,
And hath denied, to every other sky,
Spirits which soar from ruin: thy decay
Is still impregnate with divinity,
Which gilds it with revivifying ray:
Such as the great of yore, Canova° is to-day.

LVI

But where repose the all Etruscan three —
Dante and Petrarch, and scarce less than they,
The bard of Prose,° creative spirit! he
Of the Hundred Tales of love — where did they lay
Their bones, distinguished from our common clay
In death as life? Are they resolved to dust,
And have their country's marbles nought to say?
Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust?
Did they not to her breast their filial earth entrust?

LVII

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,°
Like Scipio,° buried by the upbraiding shore:
Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore
Their children's children would in vain adore
With the remorse of ages: and the crown
Which Petrarch's laureate brow° supremely wore,
Upon a far and foreign soil° had grown,
His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled° — not thine own.

LVIII

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeathed°
His dust, — and lies it not her great among,
With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed
O'er him who formed the Tuscan's siren tongue?
That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
The poetry of speech? No; — even his tomb,
Uptorn, must bear the hyæna bigot's wrong,
No more amidst the meaner dead find room,
Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for *whom!*

LIX

And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust;
Yet for this want more noted, as of yore
The Cæsar's pageant,° shorn of Brutus' bust,
Did but of Rome's best Son remind her more:
Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
Fortress of falling empire! honoured sleeps
The immortal exile: — Arqua, too, her store
Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,
While Florence vainly begs her banished dead and weeps.

LX

What is her pyramid° of precious stones?
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones
Of merchant-dukes? the momentary dews
Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse
Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead
Whose names are mausoleums of the Muse,
Are gently prest with far more reverent tread
Than ever placed the slab which paves the princely head.

LXI

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes
In Arno's dome° of Art's most princely shrine,
Where Sculpture with her rainbow sister° vies;
There be more marvels yet — but not for mine;
For I have been accustomed to entwine
My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields,
Than Art in galleries: though a work divine
Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields
Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields

LXII

Is of another temper, and I roam
By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles°
Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;
For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles
Come back before me, as his skill beguiles
The host between the mountains and the shore,
Where Courage falls in her despairing files,
And torrents, swollen to rivers with their gore,
Reek through the sultry plain, with legends scattered o'er.

LXIII

Like to a forest felled by mountain winds;
And such the storm of battle on this day,
And such the frenzy, whose convulsion blinds
To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,
An earthquake° reeled unheededly away!
None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,
And yawning forth a grave for those who lay
Upon their bucklers for a winding sheet,
Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet!

LXIV

The earth to them was as a rolling bark
Which bore them to eternity; they saw
The Ocean round, but had no time to mark
The motions of their vessel; Nature's law
In them suspended, reckèd not of the awe
Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds
Plunge in the clouds for refuge, and withdraw
From their down-toppling nests; and bellowing herds
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no words.

LXV

Far other scene is Thrasimene now:
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough;
Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain
Lay where their roots are; but a brook hath ta'en —
A little rill of scanty stream and bed —
A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain;
And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
Made the earth wet, and turned the unwilling waters red.

LXVI

But thou, Clitumnus,° in thy sweetest wave
Of the most living crystal that was e'er
The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave
Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear
Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer°
Grazes; the purest god of gentle waters!
And most serene of aspect, and most clear;
Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters,
A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters!

LXVII

And on thy happy shore a Temple still,
Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,
Upon a mild declivity of hill,
Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps
Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps
The finny darter with the glittering scales,
Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps;
While, chance, some scattered water-lily sails
Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales.

LXVIII

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place!
If through the air a zephyr more serene
Win to the brow, 'tis his; and if ye trace
Along his margin a more eloquent green,
If on the heart the freshness of the scene
Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust
Of weary life a moment lave it clean
With Nature's baptism — 'tis to him ye must
Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

LXIX

The roar of waters! — from the headlong height
Velino° cleaves the wave-worn precipice;
The fall of waters! rapid as the light
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;
The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,
And boil in endless torture: while the sweat
Of their great agony, wrung out from this
Their Phlegethon,° curls round the rocks of jet
That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

LXX

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground,
Making it all one emerald: — how profound
The gulf! and how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent

LXXI

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows
More like the fountain of an infant sea
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
Of a new world, than only thus to be
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,
With many windings, through the vale: — Look back!
Lo! where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread, — a matchless cataract,

LXXII

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,
Like hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn
Its steady dies, while all around is torn
By the distracted waters, bears serene
Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:
Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,
Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

LXXIII

Once more upon the woody Apennine,
The infant Alps, which — had I not before
Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine
Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar
The thundering lauwine° — might be worshipped more;
But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau° rear
Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar
Glaciers of bleak Mont Blanc both far and near,
And in Chimari° heard the thunder-hills of fear,

LXXIV

Th' Acroceraunian° mountains of old name;
And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
Like spirits of the spot, as 'twere for fame,
For still they soared unutterably high:
I've looked on Ida with a Trojan's eye;
Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
These hills seem things of lesser dignity,
All, save the lone Soracte's height, displayed
Not *now* in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid°

LXXV

For our remembrance, and from out the plain
Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,
And on the curl hangs pausing: not in vain
May he, who will, his recollections rake,
And quote in classic raptures, and awake
The hills with Latian echoes; I abhorred°
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The drilled dull lesson, forced down word by word
In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

LXXVI

Aught that recalls the daily drug which turned
My sickening memory; and, though Time hath taught
My mind to meditate what then it learned,
Yet such the fixed inveteracy wrought
By the impatience of my early thought,
That, with the freshness wearing out before
My mind could relish what it might have sought
If free to choose, I cannot now restore
Its health; but what it then detested, still abhor.

LXXVII

Then farewell, Horace, whom I hated so,
Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse
To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
To comprehend, but never love thy verse;
Although no deeper moralist rehearse
Our little life, nor bard prescribe his art,°
Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,
Awakening without wounding the touched heart,
Yet fare thee well — upon Soracte's ridge we part.

LXXVIII

Oh Rome, my country, City of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery,
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye!
Whose agonies are evils of a day —
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

LXXIX

The Niobe of nations! there she stands
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her withered hands,
Whose holy dust was scattered long ago;
The Scipios' tomb° contains no ashes now;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

LXXX

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire,
Have dwelt upon the seven-hilled city's pride;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep° barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climbed the Capitol; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, 'here was, or is,' where all is doubly night?

LXXXI

The double night of ages, and of her,
Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap
All round us; we but feel our way to err:
The ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,
And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap;
But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections; now we clap
Our hands, and cry 'Eureka'! it is clear —
When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

LXXXII

Alas, the lofty city! and alas,
The trebly hundred triumphs! and the day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away!
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
And Livy's pictured page! but these shall be
Her resurrection; all beside — decay.
Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free!

LXXXIII

Oh thou, whose chariot rolled on Fortune's wheel,
Triumphant Sylla![°] Thou, who didst subdue
Thy country's foes ere thou wouldst pause to feel
The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due
Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew
O'er prostrate Asia; — thou, who with thy frown
Annihilated senates — Roman, too,
With all thy vices, for thou didst lay down
With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown —

LXXXIV

The dictatorial wreath, — couldst thou divine
To what would one day dwindle that which made
Thee more than mortal? and that so supine
By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid?
She who was named eternal, and arrayed
Her warriors but to conquer — she who veiled
Earth with her haughty shadow, and displayed,
Until the o'er-canopied horizon failed,
Her rushing wings — Oh, she who was Almighty hailed!

LXXXV

Sylla was first of victors; but our own,
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell! ° — he
Too swept off senates while he hewed the throne
Down to a block — immortal rebel! See
What crimes it costs to be a moment free,
And famous through all ages! but beneath
His fate the moral lurks of destiny;
His day of double victory and death°
Beheld him win two realms, and happier, yield his breath.

LXXXVI

The third of the same moon whose former course
Had all but crowned him, on the selfsame day
Deposed him gently from his throne of force,
And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.
And showed not Fortune thus how fame and sway,
And all we deem delightful, and consume
Our souls to compass through each arduous way,
Are in her eyes less happy than the tomb?
Were they but so in man's how different were his doom!

LXXXVII

And thou, dread statue,° yet existent in
The austerest form of naked majesty,
Thou who beheldest, 'mid the assassin's din,
At thy bathed base the bloody Cæsar lie,
Folding his robe in dying dignity,
An offering to thine altar from the queen
Of gods and men, great Nemesis!° did he die,
And thou, too, perish, Pompey? have ye been
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a scene?

LXXXVIII

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse° of Rome!
She-wolf! whose brazen-imaged dugs impart
The milk of conquest yet within the dome°
Where, as a monument of antique art,
Thou standest: — Mother of the mighty heart,
Which the great founder sucked from thy wild teat,
Scorched by the Roman Jove's ethereal dart,
And thy limbs black with lightning — dost thou yet
Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge forget?

LXXXIX

Thou dost; but all thy foster-babes are dead —
The men of iron; and the world hath reared
Cities from out their sepulchres: men bled
In imitation of the things they feared,
And fought and conquered, and the same course steered,
At apish distance; but as yet none have,
Nor could, the same supremacy have neared,
Save one vain man,° who is not in the grave,
But, vanquished by himself, to his own slaves a slave —

XC

The fool of false dominion — and a kind
Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old
With steps unequal; for the Roman's mind
Was modelled in a less terrestrial mould,
With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,
And an immortal instinct which redeemed
The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold,
Alcides° with the distaff now he seemed
At Cleopatra's feet,— and now himself he beamed,

XCI

And came — and saw — and conquered! But the man
Who would have tamed his eagles down to flee,
Like a trained falcon, in the Gallic van,
Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,
With a deaf heart, which never seemed to be
A listener to itself, was strangely framed;
With but one weakest weakness — vanity,
Coquettish in ambition, still he aimed —
At what? can he avouch or answer what he claimed?

XCII

And would be all or nothing — nor could wait
For the sure grave to level him; few years
Had fixed him with the Cæsars in his fate,
On whom we tread: For *this* the conqueror rears
The arch of triumph; and for this the tears
And blood of earth flow on as they have flowed,
An universal deluge, which appears
Without an ark for wretched man's abode,
And ebbs but to reflow! Renew thy rainbow, God!

XCIII

What from this barren being do we reap?
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,
Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,
And all things weighed in custom's falsest scale;
Opinion an omnipotence, — whose veil
Mantles the earth with darkness, until right
And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale
Lest their own judgments should become too bright,
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too much light.

XCIV

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,
Proud of their trampled nature, and so die,
Bequeathing their hereditary rage
To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage
War for their chains, and rather than be free,
Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage
Within the same arena where they see
Their fellows fall before,° like leaves of the same tree.

XCV

I speak not of men's creeds — they rest between
Man and his Maker — but of things allowed,
Averred, and known, and daily, hourly seen —
The yoke that is upon us doubly bowed,
And the intent of tyranny avowed,
The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne;
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.

XCVI

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquered be,
And Freedom find no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas,° armed and undefiled?
Or must such minds be nourished in the wild,
Deep in the unpruned forest 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled
On infant Washington? ° Has Earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore?

XCVII

But France got drunk° with blood to vomit crime,
And fatal have her Saturnalia been
To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime;
Because the deadly days which we have seen,
And vile Ambition, that built up between
Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,
And the base pageant last upon the scene,
Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst — his second fall.

XCVIII

Yet, Freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind;
Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind;
Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
Chopped by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
But the sap lasts,° — and still the seed we find
Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North;°
So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

XCIX

There is a stern round tower° of other days,
Firm as a fortress,° with its fence of stone,
Such as an army's baffled strength delays,
Standing with half its battlements alone,
And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
The garland of eternity, where wave
The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown: —
What was this tower of strength? within its cave
What treasure lay so locked, so hid? — A woman's grave.

C

But who was she, the lady of the dead,
Tombed in a palace? Was she chaste and fair?
Worthy a king's or more — a Roman's bed?
What race of chiefs and heroes did she bear?
What daughter of her beauties was the heir?
How lived, how loved, how died she? Was she not
So honoured — and conspicuously there,
Where meaner relics must not dare to rot,
Placed to commemorate a more than mortal lot?

CI

Was she as those who love their lords, or they
Who love the lords of others? such have been
Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.
Was she a matron of Cornelia's° mien,
Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,°
Profuse of joy — or 'gainst it did she war,
Inveterate in virtue? Did she lean
To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar
Love from amongst her griefs? — for such the affections are.

CII

Perchance she died in youth; it may be, bowed
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb
That weighed upon her gentle dust, a cloud
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom
Heaven gives its favourites — early death; yet shed
A sunset charm around her, and illume
With hectic light, the Hesperus° of the dead,
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.°

CIII

Perchance she died in age — surviving all,
Charms, kindred, children — with the silver gray
On her long tresses, which might yet recall,
It may be, still a something of the day
When they were braided, and her proud array
And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed
By Rome — But whither would Conjecture stray?
Thus much alone we know — Metella died,
The wealthiest Roman's wife: Behold his love or pride!

CIV

I know not why — but standing thus by thee°
It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
Thou Tomb, and other days come back to me
With recollected music, though the tone
Is changed and solemn, like a cloudy groan
Of dying thunder on the distant wind;
Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
Till I had bodied forth the heated mind
Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin leaves behind;

CV

And from the planks, far shattered o'er the rocks,
Built me a little bark of hope, once more
To battle with the ocean and the shocks
Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar
Which rushes on the solitary shore
Where all lies foundered° that was ever dear:
But could I gather from the wave-worn store
Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer?
There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is here.

CVI

Then let the winds howl on! their harmony
Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
The sound shall temper with the owlets' cry
As I now hear them, in the fading light
Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site,
Answering each other on the Palatine,
With their large eyes, all glistening gray and bright,
And sailing pinions. — Upon such a shrine
What are our petty griefs? — let me not number mine.

CVII

Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown
Matted and massed together, hillocks heaped
On what were chambers, arch crushed, column strown
In fragments, choked up vaults, and frescos steeped
In subterranean damps, where the owl peeped,
Deeming it midnight: — Temples, baths, or halls?
Pronounce who can; for all that Learning reaped
From her research hath been, that these are walls —
Behold the Imperial Mount!° 'tis thus the mighty falls.

CVIII

There is the moral of all human tales;
'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
First freedom and then glory — when that fails,
Wealth, vice, corruption, — barbarism at last,
And History, with all her volumes vast,
Hath but *one* page — 'tis better written here,
Where gorgeous Tyranny hath thus amassed
All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,
Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask — Away with words — draw near,

CIX

Admire, exult, despise, laugh, weep, — for here
There is such matter for all feeling: — Man,
Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear!
Ages and realms are crowded in this span,
This mountain, whose obliterated plan
The pyramid of empires pinnacled,
Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van
Till the sun's rays with added flame were filled!
Where are its golden roofs? where those who dared to build?

CX

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
Thou nameless column° with the buried base!
What are the laurels of the Cæsar's brow?
Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place.
Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,
Titus or Trajan's? ° No — 'tis that of Time;
Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace
Scoffing; and apostolic statues° climb
To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes° slept sublime,

CXI

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,
And looking to the stars: they had contained
A spirit which with these would find a home,
The last of those who o'er the whole earth reigned,
The Roman globe,° for after none sustained,
But yielded back his conquests: — he was more
Than a mere Alexander, and unstained
With household blood and wine,° serenely wore
His sovereign virtues — still we Trajan's name adore.°

CXII

Where is the rock of Triumph,° the high place
Where Rome embraced° her heroes? where the steep
Tarpeian,° fittest goal of Treason's race,
The promontory° whence the Traitor's Leap
Cured all ambition? Did the conquerors heap
Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below
A thousand years of silenced factions sleep —
The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,
And still the eloquent air breathes — burns with Cicero!

CXIII

The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood:
Here a proud people's passions were exhaled,
From the first hour of empire in the bud
To that when further worlds to conquer failed;
But long before had Freedom's face been veiled,
And Anarchy assumed her attributes;
Till every lawless soldier who assailed
Trod on the trembling senate's slavish mutes,
Or raised the venal voice° of baser prostitutes.

CXIV

Then turn we to her latest tribune's name,
From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,
Redeemer of dark centuries of shame —
The friend of Petrarch — hope of Italy —
Rienzi,° last of Romans! While the tree
Of freedom's withered trunk puts forth a leaf,
Even for thy tomb a garland let it be —
The forum's champion, and the people's chief —
Her new-born Numa° thou — with reign, alas! too brief.

CXV

Egeria,° sweet creation of some heart
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast! whate'er thou art
Or wert, — a young Aurora of the air,
The nympholepsy of some fond despair;
Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,
Who found a more than common votary there
Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,
Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

CXVI

The mosses of thy fountain° still are sprinkled
With thine Elysian water-drops; the face
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
Whose green, wild margin now no more erase
Art's works; nor must the delicate waters sleep,
Prisoned in marble; bubbling from the base
Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap
The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers, and ivy creep,

CXVII

Fantastically tangled; the green hills
Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;
Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,
Implore the pausing step, and with their dies
Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass;
The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
Kissed by the breath of heaven, seems coloured by its skies.

CXVIII

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,
Egeria, thy all heavenly bosom beating
For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover!
The purple Midnight° veiled that mystic meeting
With her most starry canopy, and seating
Thyself by thine adorer, what befell?
This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting
Of an enamoured Goddess, and the cell
Haunted by holy Love — the earliest oracle!

CXIX

And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,
Blend a celestial with a human heart;
And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,
Share with immortal transports? could thine art
Make them indeed immortal, and impart
The purity of heaven to earthly joys,
Expel the venom and not blunt the dart —
The dull satiety which all destroys —
And root from out the soul the deadly weed which cloys.

CXX

Alas! our young affections run to waste,
Or water but the desert; whence arise
But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes,
Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,
And trees whose gums are poison; such the plants
Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants
For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants.

CXXI

Oh Love, no habitant of earth° thou art —
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee, —
A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart, —
But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see
The naked eye, thy form, as it should be;
The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,
Even with its own desiring phantasy,
And to a thought such shape and image given,
As haunts the unquenched soul — parched, wearied, wrung, and riven.

CXXII

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
And fevers into false creation. Where,
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seized?
In him alone. Can nature show so fair?
Where are the charms and virtues which we dare
Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,
The unreached Paradise of our despair,
Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,
And overpowers the page where it would bloom again?

CXXIII

Who loves, raves — 'tis youth's frenzy — but the cure
Is bitterer still, as charm by charm unwinds
Which robed our idols, and we see too sure
Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's
Ideal shape of such ; yet still it binds
The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,
Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds ;
The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,
Seems ever near the prize° — wealthiest when most undone.

CXXIV

We wither from our youth,° we gasp away —
Sick — sick ; unfound the boon, unslaked the thirst,
Though to the last, in verge of our decay,
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first —
But all too late, — so are we doubly curst.
Love, fame, ambition, avarice — 'tis the same,
Each idle, and all ill, and none the worst —
For all are meteors with a different name,
And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

CXXV

Few — none — find what they love or could have loved.
Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
Necessity of loving, have removed
Antipathies — but to recur, ere long,
Envenomed with irrevocable wrong ;
And Circumstance, that unspiritual god
And miscreator, makes and helps along
Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
Whose touch turns hope to dust, — the dust we all have trod.

CXXVI

Our life is a false nature: 'tis not in
The harmony of things, — this hard decree,
This uneradicable taint of sin,
This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,
Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be
The skies which rain their plagues on men like dew —
Disease, death, bondage — all the woes we see,
And worse, the woes we see not — which throb through
The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

CXXVII

Yet let us ponder boldly — 'tis a base
Abandonment of reason to resign
Our right of thought — our last and only place
Of refuge: this at least, shall still be mine:
Though from our birth the faculty divine
Is chained and tortured — cabined, cribbed, confined,
And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine
Too brightly on the unprepared mind,
The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the blind.

CXXVIII

Arches on arches! as it were that Rome,
Collecting the chief trophies of her line,
Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,
Her Coliseum° stands; the moonbeams shine
As 'twere its natural torches, for divine
Should be the light which streams here, to illume
This long-explored but still exhaustless mine
Of contemplation; and the azure gloom
Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

CXXIX

Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven,
Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,
And shadows forth its glory. There is given
Unto the things of earth, which time hath bent,
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
And magic in the ruined battlement,
For which the palace of the present hour
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.

CXXX

Oh Time, the beautifier of the dead,
Adorner of the ruin, comforter
And only healer when the heart hath bled! —
Time! the corrector where our judgments err,
The test of truth, love — sole philosopher,
For all beside are sophists — from thy thrift,
Which never loses though it doth defer —
Time, the avenger! unto thee I lift
My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift:

CXXXI

Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made a shrine
And temple more divinely desolate,
Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,
Ruins of years, though few, yet full of fate:
If thou hast ever seen me too elate,
Hear me not; but if calmly I have borne
Good, and reserved my pride against the hate
Which shall not whelm me, let me not have worn
This iron in my soul in vain — shall *they* not mourn?

CXXXII

And thou, who never yet of human wrong
Left the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis! °
Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long —
Thou, who didst call the Furies° from the abyss,
And round Orestes° bade them howl and hiss
For that unnatural retribution — just,
Had it but been from hands less near — in this
Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust!
Dost thou not hear my heart? — Awake! thou shalt, and must.

CXXXIII

It is not that I may not have incurred
For my ancestral faults or mine the wound
I bleed withal, and had it been conferred
With a just weapon, it had flowed unbound;
But now my blood shall not sink in the ground:
To thee I do devote it — *thou* shalt take
The vengeance, which shall yet be sought and found
Which if *I* have not taken for the sake —
But let that pass — I sleep, but thou shalt yet awake.

CXXXIV

And if my voice break forth, 'tis not that now
I shrink from what is suffered: let him speak
Who hath beheld decline upon my brow,
Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak;
But on this page a record will I seek.
Not in the air shall these my words disperse,
Though I be ashes; a far hour shall wreak
The deep prophetic fulness of this verse,
And pile on human heads the mountains of my curse!

CXXXV

That curse shall be Forgiveness, — Have I not —
Hear me, my mother Earth! behold it, Heaven! —
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?
Have I not suffered things to be forgiven?
Have I not had my brain seared, my heart riven,
Hopes sapped, name blighted, Life's life lied away?
And only not to desperation driven,
Because not altogether of such clay°
As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

CXXXVI

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy
Have I not seen what human things could do?
From the loud roar of foaming calumny
To the small whisper of the as paltry few,
And subtler venom of the reptile crew,
The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
Learning to lie with silence, would *seem* true,
And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,
Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

CXXXVII

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain:°
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame perish even in conquering pain;
But there is that within me which shall tire
Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire;
Something unearthly, which they deem not of,
Like the remembered tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their softened spirits sink, and move
In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.

CXXXVIII

The seal is set. — Now welcome, thou dread power,°
Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here
Walkest in the shadow of the midnight hour
With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear!
Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
Their ivy mantles, and the solemn scene
Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear
That we become a part of what has been,
And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

CXXXIX

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmured pity, or loud-roared applause,
As man was slaughtered by his fellow man.
And wherefore slaughtered? wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure. — Wherefore not?
What matters where we fall to fill the maws
Of worms, — on battle-plains or listed spot?
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

CXL

I see before me the Gladiator lie:°
He leans upon his hands — his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his drooped head sinks gradually low —
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims around him — he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hailed the wretch who won.

CXLI

He heard it, but he heeded not — his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He recked not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother° — he, their sire,
Butchered to make a Roman holiday —
All this rushed with his blood — Shall he expire
And unavenged? Arise! ye Goths,° and glut your ire!

CXLII

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roared or murmured like a mountain stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
Here, where the Roman millions' blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
My voice sounds much — and fall the stars' faint rays
On the arena void — seats crushed — walls bowed —
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

CXLIII

A ruin — yet what ruin! — from its mass°
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been reared;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
And marvel where the spoil could have appeared.
Hath it indeed been plundered, or but cleared?
Alas! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is neared:
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much to all, years man have reft away.

CXLIV

But when the rising moon begins to climb°
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,°
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
Heroes have trod this spot — 'tis on their dust ye tread.

CXLV

'While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;°
When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall,
And when Rome falls — the World.'° From our own land
Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
Ancient; and these three mortal things are still
On their foundations, and unaltered all;
Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,
The World, the same wide den — of thieves, or what ye will.

CXLVI

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime —
Shrine of all saints° and temple of all gods,
From Jove to Jesus — spared and blessed by time;
Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods
Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods
His way through thorns to ashes — glorious dome!
Shalt thou not last? Time's scythe and tyrants' rods
Shiver upon thee — sanctuary and home
Of art and piety — Pantheon! — pride of Rome!

CXLVII

Relic of nobler days, and noblest arts!
Despoiled yet perfect, with thy circle spreads
A holiness appealing to all hearts —
To art a model; and to him who treads
Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds
Her light through thy sole aperture; to those
Who worship, here are altars for their beads;
And they who feel for genius may repose
Their eyes on honoured forms, whose busts around them close.

CXLVIII

There is a dungeon,° in whose dim drear light
What do I gaze on? Nothing: Look again!
Two forms are slowly shadowed on my sight —
Two insulated phantoms of the brain:
It is not so; I see them full and plain —
An old man, and a female young and fair,
Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein
The blood is nectar: — But what doth she there,
With her unmantled neck, and bosom white and bare?

CXLIX

Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,
Where *on* the heart and *from* the heart we took
Our first and sweetest nurture, when the wife,
Blest into mother, in the innocent look,
Or even the piping cry of lips that brook
No pain, and small suspense, a joy perceives
Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook
She sees her little bud put forth its leaves —
What may the fruit be yet? — I know not — Cain was Eve's.

CL

But here youth offers to old age the food,
The milk of his own gift: it is her sire
To whom she renders back the debt of blood
Born with her birth. No; he shall not expire
While in those warm and lovely veins the fire
Of health and holy feeling can provide
Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream rises higher
Than Egypt's river: from that gentle side
Drink, drink and live, old man! Heaven's realm holds no such tide.

CLI

The starry fable° of the milky way
Has not thy story's purity: it is
A constellation of a sweeter ray,
And sacred Nature triumphs more in this
Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss
Where sparkle distant worlds: — Oh, holiest nurse!
No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss
To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source
With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.°

CLII

Turn to the mole° which Hadrian reared on high,
Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,
Colossal copyist of deformity,
Whose travelled phantasy° from the far Nile's
Enormous model, doomed the artist's toils
To build for giants, and for his vain earth,
His shrunken ashes, raised his doom: How smiles
The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,
To view the huge design which sprung from such a birth!

CLIII

But lo! the dome° — the vast and wondrous dome,
To which Diana's marvel° was a cell —
Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb!
I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle; —
Its columns strew the wilderness, and dwell
The hyæna and the jackal in their shade;
I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs° swell
Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have surveyed
Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem° prayed;

CLIV

But thou, of temples old, or altars new,
Standest alone, with nothing like to thee —
Worthiest of God the holy and the true.
Since Zion's desolation,° when that He
Forsook his former city, what could be,
Of earthly structures, in his honour piled,
Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,
Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty all are aisled
In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

CLV

Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not;
And why? it is not lessened; but thy mind,
Expanded by the genius of the spot,
Has grown colossal, and can only find
A fit abode wherein appear enshrined
Thy hopes of immortality; and thou
Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,
See thy God° face to face, as thou dost now
His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow.

CLVI

Thou movest, but increasing with the advance,
Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,
Deceived by its gigantic elegance;
Vastness which grows, but grows to harmonise —
All musical in its immensities;
Rich marbles, richer painting — shrines where flame
The lamps of gold — and haughty dome which vies
In air with Earth's chief structures, though their frame
Sits on the firm-set ground, and this the clouds must claim.

CLV

Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must break,
To separate contemplation, the great whole;
And as the ocean many bays will make
That ask the eye — so here condense thy soul
To more immediate objects, and control
Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart
Its eloquent proportions, and unroll
In mighty graduations, part by part,
The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

CLVIII

Not by its fault — but thine: Our outward sense
Is but of gradual grasp — and as it is
That what we have of feeling most intense
Outstrips our faint expression: even so this
Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice
Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the great
Defies at first our Nature's littleness,
Till, growing with its growth,° we thus dilate
Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

CLIX

Then pause, and be enlightened; there is more
In such a survey than the sating gaze
Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore
The worship of the place, or the mere praise
Of art and its great masters, who could raise
What former time, nor skill, nor thought could plan;
The fountain of sublimity° displays
Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man
Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions can.

CLX

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see
Laocoön's torture° dignifying pain —
A father's love and mortal's agony
With an immortal patience blending: Vain
The struggle; vain, against the coiling strain
And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,
The old man's clench; the long envenomed chain
Rivets the living links, — the enormous asp
Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp.

CLXI

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,°
The God of life, and poesy, and light —
The sun in human limbs arrayed, and brow
All radiant from his triumph in the fight;
The shaft° hath just been shot — the arrow bright
With an immortal's vengeance; in his eye
And nostril beautiful disdain, and might
And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
Developing in that one glance the Deity.

CLXII

But in his delicate form — a dream of Love,
Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
Longed for a deathless lover from above,
And maddened in that vision — are exprest
All that ideal beauty ever blessed
The mind with, in its most unearthly mood,
When each conception was a heavenly guest —
A ray of immortality — and stood,
Starlike, around, until they gathered to a god!

CLXIII

And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven
The fire which we endure, it was repaid
By him to whom the energy was given
Which this poetic marble hath arrayed
With an eternal glory — which, if made
By human hands, is not of human thought;
And Time himself hath hallowed it, nor laid
One ringlet in the dust — nor hath it caught
A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which
'twas wrought.

CLXIV

But where is he,° the Pilgrim of my song,
The being who upheld it through the past?
Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.
He is no more° — these breathings are his last;
His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,
And he himself is nothing: — if he was
Aught but a phantasy, and could be classed
With forms which live and suffer — let that pass —
His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

CLXV

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all
That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
And spreads the dim and universal pall
Through which all things grow phantoms; and the cloud
Between us sinks and all which ever glowed,
Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays
A melancholy halo scarce allowed.
To hover on the verge of darkness; rays
Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze.

CLXVI

And send us prying into the abyss,
To gather what we shall be when the frame
Shall be resolved to something less than this
Its wretched essence; and to dream of fame,
And wipe the dust from off the idle name
We never more shall hear, — but never more,
Oh, happier thought! can we be made the same:
It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore
These fardels of the heart — the heart whose sweat was gore.

CLXVII

Hark — forth from the abyss a voice proceeds,°
A long low distant murmur of dread sound,
Such as arises when a nation bleeds
With some deep and immedicable wound;
Through storm and darkness yawns the rending ground,
The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief
Seems royal still, though with her head discrowned,
And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief
She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields no relief.

CLXVIII

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou?
Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead?
Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low
Some less majestic, less beloved head?
In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
Death hushed that pang for ever: with thee fled
The present happiness and promised joy
Which filled the imperial isles so full it seemed to cloy.

CLXIX

Peasants bring forth in safety. — Can it be,
Oh thou that wert so happy, so adored,
Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee,
And freedom's heart grown heavy, cease to hoard
Her many griefs for ONE! for she had poured
Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head
Beheld her Iris. — Thou, too, lonely lord,
And desolate consort — vainly wert thou wed!
The husband of a year! the father of the dead!

CLXX

Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made;
Thy bridal's fruit is ashes: in the dust
The fair haired Daughter of the Isles is laid,
The love of millions! How we did entrust
Futurity to her; and, though it must
Darken above our bones, yet fondly deemed
Our children should obey her child, and blessed
Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seemed
Like stars to shepherd's eyes: — 'twas but a meteor beamed.

CLXXI

Woe unto us, not her; for she sleeps well:
The fickle reek of popular breath, the tongue
Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,
Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung
Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung
Nations have armed in madness, the strange fate°
Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath flung
Against their blind omnipotence a weight
Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon or late, —

CLXXII

These might have been her destiny; but no,
Our hearts deny it: and so young, so fair,
Good without effort, great without a foe.
But now a bride and mother — and now *there!*
How many ties did that stern moment tear!
From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's breast
Is linked the electric chain of that despair,
Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and opprest
The land which loved thee so that none could love thee best.

CLXXIII

Lo, Nemi!° navelled in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which tears
The oak from his foundation, and which spills
The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;
And calm as cherished hate, its surface wears
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,
All coiled into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

CLXXIV

And near, Albano's scarce divided waves°
Shine from a sister valley; — and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves
The Latian coast where sprung the Epic war,
'Arms and the man,'° whose re-ascending star
Rose o'er an empire: — but beneath thy right
Tully reposed from Rome; — and where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight
The Sabine farm° was tilled, 'the weary bard's' delight.

CLXXV

But I forget. — My Pilgrim's shrine is won,
And he and I must part, — so let it be, —
His task and mine alike are nearly done;
Yet once more let us look upon the sea;
The midland ocean° breaks on him and me,
And from the Alban Mount we now behold
Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which when we
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock° unfold
Those waves, we followed on till the dark Euxine rolled

CLXXVI

Upon the blue Symplegades:° long years —
Long, though not very many — since have done
Their work on both; some suffering and some tears
Have left us nearly where we had begun:
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run;
We have had our reward, and it is here, —
That we can yet feel gladdened by the sun,
And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

CLXXVII

Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place,°
With one fair Spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,
And, hating no one, love but only her!
Ye elements! — in whose ennobling stir
I feel myself exalted — Can ye not
Accord me such a being?° Do I err
In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

CLXXVIII

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,°
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

CLXXIX

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean — roll!°
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin — his control
Stops with the shore; upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.

CLXXX

His steps are not upon thy paths, — thy fields
Are not a spoil for him, — thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And sendest him shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth: — there let him lay.

CLXXXI

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war —
These are thy toys, and as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

CLXXXII

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee —
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters washed them power while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage! their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts: — not so thou;
Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play —
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow —
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

CLXXXIII

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time, —
Calm or convulsed, in breeze or gale or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving — boundless, endless, and sublime,
The image of eternity, the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

CLXXXIV

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy°
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wantoned with thy breakers — they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror — 'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane — as I do here.°

CLXXXV

My task is done,° my song has ceased, my theme
Has died into an echo; it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream.
The torch shall be extinguished which hath lit
My midnight lamp — and what is writ, is writ;
Would it were worthier! but I am not now
That which I have been — and my visions flit
Less palpably before me — and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

CLXXXVI

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been —
A sound which makes us linger; — yet — farewell!
Ye! who have traced the pilgrim to the scene
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon,° and scallop-shell;°
Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were — with *you*, the moral of his strain.

CHRONOLOGICAL

FIRST PERIOD, 1788–1811

1788. Born in Hollis Street, London.
1790–1798. At Aberdeen.
1792. At Mr. Bowers's school.
1798. Removes to the ancestral abbey at Newstead.
1799. At Sloane Terrace, London.
1800. "First dash into poetry."
1800–1805. At Harrow.
1805. Enters Cambridge University.
1806–1807. *Juvenilia*, and *Hours of Idleness*.
Cambridge friends: Harness, Long, Matthews, Hodgson, Drury, Davies, and Hobhouse. Vacations at Newstead, London, and Southwell.
1808. Receives degree of M.A. Succeeds to title by death of grand-uncle.
1809. Takes his seat in the House of Lords as George Gordon, sixth Lord Byron. *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.* Visits Italy, Spain, and Greece. Begins *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*
1811. Returns to London.

SECOND PERIOD, 1812–1815

1812. First Speech in House of Lords. *Childe Harold*, Cantos I. and II. *The Curse of Minerva.*

1813. *The Waltz. The Giaour. The Bride of Abydos.*
1814. *The Corsair. Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte. Lara.*
1815. Marries Miss Milbanke. *Hebrew Melodies.* Meets Scott.

THIRD PERIOD, 1816–1824

In Switzerland, Italy, and Greece

1816. *The Siege of Corinth*, and *Parisina. Childe Harold*, Canto III. *The Prisoner of Chillon. Monody on the Death of Sheridan.* With the Shelleys.
1817. *Manfred. The Lament of Tasso.*
1818. *Childe Harold*, Canto IV.
1819. *Beppo. Mazeppa. Don Juan*, Cantos I., II. Sells Newstead.
1820. At Ravenna.
1821–1822. At Pisa and Genoa.
1821. *Don Juan*, Cantos III., IV., V. *Marino. Faliero. The Prophecy of Dante. Sardanapalus. The Two Foscari. Cain.*
1822. *The Vision of Judgment. Heaven and Earth.* Shelley drowned.
1823. *Don Juan*, Cantos VI.–XIV. *Morgante Maggiore. Werner. The Age of Bronze. The Island.* Expedition to Greece.
1824. *Don Juan*, Cantos XV.–XVI. *The Deformed Transformed.* Death at Missolonghi, April 19. Buried in the village church, Hucknall-Torkard, England, July 16.

NOTES

Childe Harold is the most interesting of all Byron's poems as a revelation of the author, for it is connected with the three periods of his life and work. Cantos I. and II. were composed in the first period, and published in the second; while cantos III. and IV. were composed and published in the third. He had been at Harrow and Cambridge, and had published *Hours of Idleness*, which were much like the early poems of other great poets, and contained much chaff and a little wheat, sufficient for a modest sowing, but capable of producing abundant harvest. The severe criticism which the *Edinburgh Review* dealt out to this little volume so exasperated the poet that soon after he had taken his seat in the House of Lords he created that modern *Dunciad*, which he later called "a record of misplaced anger and indiscriminate acrimony," *The English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, in which he gave no quarter to poet or critic. He was then living at Newstead Abbey, where, in company with a few college favorites, Matthews, Davies, Hodgson, and Hobhouse, he held high carnival, talking on poetry and philosophy; telling stories of the early frequenters of the abbey; drinking wine out of skull cups made from the craniums of the old abbots; riding, rowing, fencing, and playing with the wolf and bear which guarded the entrance to the abbey.

On the 2d of July, 1809, he set sail from Falmouth with his friend Hobhouse, a valet by the name of Fletcher, his old butler Murray, and Rushton, the son of one of his tenants. They reached Lisbon in about twelve days. After visiting Cintra, they rode through Spain, stopping at Seville and Cadiz. Hence by ship

via Gibraltar to Malta, where they remained three weeks. Sailing from Malta in the *Spider*, they coasted Acarnania, in view of Ithaca and Actium. Landing at Previsa, they took a tour through Albania, —

"Through lands scarce noticed in historic tales."

At Janina they were entertained by order of Ali Pasha, the famous bandit. Here *Childe Harold* was begun. Then by Acherusia's lake and Zitza to Tepalen, where Ali Pasha met them in person. Thence through Epirus and Acarnania to Missolonghi, Patras, and Vostizza, where they caught sight of the snowy peaks of Parnassus. Visiting Delphi and Thebes, they reached Athens on Christmas Day. They remained in Athens about three months, and visited Eleusis, Hymettus, and Marathon. In March they went to Smyrna, where the second canto of *Childe Harold* was completed; thence to the Troad and Constantinople. Here Hobhouse returned to England, while Byron remained, spending his time in Athens and its vicinity until July, 1811, when, because of lack of funds, he returned to England, "without a hope and almost without a desire."

During his absence he had actually composed but little poetry besides the *Childe Harold*, only *Hints from Horace* and *The Curse of Minerva;* but he had gathered material for many a weird and tragic tale. On his return he placed in Mr. Dallas's hands *Hints from Horace.* This poem did not please Mr. Dallas, and he asked Byron if he had no other result of his travels; and the reply was, "A few short pieces and a lot of Spenserian stanzas, not worth troubling you with, but you are welcome to them." On looking these over, he wrote to Byron, "You have written one of the most delightful poems I ever read." He took the risk of publication at the hands of Murray. On the 27th of February, 1812, Byron made his first speech in the House of Lords in behalf of the wage-earners of Nottingham. Two days later the first two cantos of *Childe Harold* were published. The first copy was sent to his sister Augusta, Mrs. Leigh, with the inscription: "To Augusta, my dearest sister and my best friend, who has ever loved me much

better than I deserved, this volume is presented by her father's son and most affectionate brother B." Thus it was the world came by *Childe Harold.*

The title-page presented the following motto from *Le Cosmopolite ou le Citoyen du Monde*, F. de Monbron: "L'univers est une espèce de livre, dont on n'a lu que la première page quand on n'a vu que sur page. J'en ai feuilleté un assez grand nombre, que j'ai trouvé également mauvaises. Cet examen ne m'a point été infructeux. Je haïssais ma patrie. Toutes les impertinences des peuples divers, parmi lesquels j'ai vécu, n'ont réconcilié avec elle. Quand je n'auvais tiré d'autre bénéfice de mon voyages que celui-là, je n'en regretterais ni les frais ni les fatigues."

DEDICATION

This dedication to Lady Charlotte Harley, second daughter of the Earl of Oxford, was not in the first edition, but was written in the autumn of 1812. She was then only eleven years of age, and Byron twenty-four. He was so impressed with her beauty that he had her portrait painted by Westall for *Childe Harold.*

l. 19. **Peri.** Persian for fairy.

l. 28. **wild as the Gazelle's.** Cf. *Giaour:*—

> "Her eye's dark charm 't were vain to tell,
> But gaze on that of the Gazelle,
> It will assist thy fancy well."

CANTO FIRST

ll. 1–9. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I., 1–26, and Wordsworth in *Recluse*, "On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life," etc.

l. 4. **sacred hill.** Parnassus, the abode of the Muses. Cf. Tennyson, *Parnassus.*

l. 5. **vaunted rill.** "We were sprinkled," says Hobhouse, "with the spray of the immortal rill."

l. 6. **shrine.** The temple of Apollo. The village of Castri stands partly on the site of the old temple.

ll. 14–18. **Ah me**, etc. These lines and those of the following ten stanzas have doubtless deterred many from reading the poem. There is in them something of the *Don Juan*, that spirit of melodrama and affectation which is distinctly Byronic. They should be read as what Byron wished some people to think he was, rather than as actual history. No poet was ever more careless of gaining the fit audience than he. He said, "I hate motives;" and there is here something of a motiveless malignity which would shock those mortals afflicted with the disease which Dean Hole called piosity, as distinguished from piety.

There is no doubt that the life at Newstead with his college friends was somewhat hilarious, but by no means that of vulgar debauchery. In the preface to the poem, p. xxvi, Byron protests against being taken literally, and yet it is true that no poem is more at heart autobiographical.

ll. 19–25. **Childe Harold was he hight**, etc. In first drafts Byron wrote *Childe Burun*. "The childe is a young Englishman of the opening years of the present century, who has the distinction of being the prey to consuming ardors, and is touched by the melancholy which accompanies unsatisfied aspirations." — E. Dowden.

Byron adopts the Spenserian stanza, which is natural; but he affects Spenser's language in the early stanzas, which is unnatural. However, he soon drops the latter to the advantage of his art.

hight. Called.

l. 23. **losel**. Spendthrift.

ll. 26–27. **Nor florid prose**, etc. Cf. Cowper, *The Task*, VI., 989–995: —

> "Aware that what is base
> No polish can make sterling, and that vice,
> Though well perfumed and elegantly dressed,
> Like an unburied carcase tricked with flowers,
> Is but a garnished nuisance, fitter far
> For cleanly riddance than for fair attire."

In *The Prayer of Nature*, Byron wrote: —

> "Can guilt like man's be e'er forgiven?
> Can vice atone for crimes by prayer?"

Cf. Wordsworth, *Prelude*, for a contrast in the life of another young Englishman of the closing years of last century : —

> "Fair seedtime had my soul, and I grew up,
> Fostered alike by beauty and by fear,
> Much favored in my birthplace."

ll. 28–31. **basked him**, etc. Cf. Cowper, *The Task*, VI., 589–592 : —

> "The springtime of our years
> Is soon dishonoured and defiled in most
> By budding ills, that ask a prudent hand
> To check them."

l. 34. **He felt the fulness of satiety.** "Byron knew not moderation or self-restraint, . . . thus came satiety and remorse." — Roden Noel.

"It is, indeed, Byron's great capacity for enjoyment that gives *Childe Harold* its real interest." — E. Dowden.

ll. 39–45. **loved but one**, etc. Byron's love, like that of Burns, began early, and was intense. At the age of eight he fell in love with a Scotch girl, Mary Duff, of Aberdeen. He says, "My love for that girl was so violent that I sometimes doubt if I have ever been really attached since." Ruskin, in alluding to her when she was Mrs. Cockburn, says: "She had been Lord Byron's first of first loves. She was the Mary Duff of Lachin-y-Gair. When I first remember her, still extremely beautiful in middle age." — *Praeterila*, Chap. V. While at Harrow, Byron met Mary Chaworth, the heiress of the family whose estates at Annesley joined those of Newstead. He loved her passionately, and during vacation saw much of her. His hopes of winning her were dashed, however, when he overheard her say, "Do you think I could care for that lame boy?" She was the "one" alluded to in this line. He afterward wrote several poems to her, although she had married ; and they reveal what a shock he had received. Cf. *Stanzas to a Lady on Leaving England :* —

> "And I must from this land be gone,
> Because I cannot love but one."

Verses to Mary: —

"When late I saw thy favorite child,
I thought my jealous heart would break.
But when the unconscious infant smiled,
I kissed it for its mother's sake."

To a Lady: —

"Oh, had my fate been join'd with thine,
As once this pledge appear'd a token,
These follies had not then been mine,
For then my peace had not been broken."

In *The Dream*, written soon after his marriage with Miss Milbanke, he reveals what a tragedy his life had become. He thus alludes to his marriage: —

"The Wanderer was return'd, — I saw him stand
Before an Altar — with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The Starlight of his Boyhood."

There is no doubt that one of the greatest influences in Byron's life was this attachment for Mary Chaworth.

ll. 46–49. **sore sick at heart,** etc.

"Weary of love, of life, devour'd with spleen,
I rest a perfect Timon, not nineteen."

"I know thee for a man of many thoughts,
And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,
Fatal and fated in thy sufferings." — MANFRED.

ll. 56–59. **a vast and venerable pile,** etc. Cf. *On Leaving Newstead Abbey:* —

"Of the mail-cover'd Barons who proudly to battle
Led their vassals from Europe to Palestine's plain,
The Escutcheon and Shield, which with every blast rattle
Are the only sad vestiges now that remain."

Elegy in Newstead Abbey: —

"Newstead! what saddening change of scene is thine!
Thy yawning arch betokens slow decay!"

l. 61. **Paphian girls.** Followers of Venus, the goddess of Paphos.

ll. 64–67. **in his maddest mirthful mood,** etc. Once, when another student was to occupy Byron's room in Trinity, Jones (the gyp) said, "I recommend to your attention not to damage any of the moveables, for Lord Byron, sir, is a young man of *tumultuous passions.*"

ll. 75–76. **He knew them flatt'rers,** etc. While this must not be construed to mean that the friends at Newstead were insincere, — he had ordered their portraits painted for himself, — yet it does reveal his loneliness even when surrounded by these associates. Mrs. Oliphant says: "There seems to have been absolutely no reason for his entire isolation; and yet it existed. . . . It is impossible to imagine a more forlorn figure than that of this noble, handsome, gifted young man, knowing nobody, caring for nobody."

l. 77. **lemans.** Mistresses.

l. 79. Cupid finds a companion.

ll. 82–83. **had a mother,** etc. Wordsworth has said, "The child is father of the man;" and Barrie, "It doesn't matter much what happens to one after he is twelve." To what extent the mother moulds the character of the child is well known, and we cannot but feel that Byron was most unfortunate in maternal relations. Contrast the early home influences of Milton, Wordsworth, and Tennyson with that of Byron. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, VIII., 546–559: —

> "Yet when I approach
> Her loveliness, so absolute she seems
> And in herself complete, so well to know
> Her own, that what she wills to do or say
> Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best.
> All higher knowledge in her presence falls
> Degraded; Wisdom in discourse with her
> Loses discountenanced, and like Folly shows;
> Authority and Reason on her wait,
> As one intended first, not after made

Occasionally; and to consummate all,
Greatness of mind and nobleness their seats
Build in her loveliest, and create an army
About her, as a guard angelic, placed."

Cf. Wordsworth, *Prelude*, V., 266–293: —

"She, not falsely taught,
Fetching her goodness rather from times past,
Than shaping novelties for times to come,
Had no presumption.

. . . . . .

Not from faculties more strong
Than others have, but from the times, perhaps,
And spot in which she lived, and through a grace
Of modest meekness, simple-mindedness,
A heart that found benignity and hope,
Being itself benign."

Cf. Tennyson, *The Princess*, VII., 292–312: —

"'Alone,' I said, 'from earlier than I know,
Immersed in rich foreshadowings of the world,
I loved the woman: he, that doth not, lives
A drowning life, besotted in sweet self,
Or pines in sad experience worse than death,
Or keeps his wing'd affections clipt with crime:
Yet was there one thro' whom I loved her, one
Not learned, save in gracious household ways,
Not perfect, nay, but full of tender wants,
No Angel, but a dearer being, all dipt
In Angel instincts, breathing Paradise,
Interpreter between the Gods and men,
Who look'd all native to her place, and yet
On tiptoe seem'd to touch upon a sphere
Too gross to tread, and all male minds perforce
Sway'd to her from their orbits as they moved,
And girdled her with music. Happy he
With such a mother! faith in womankind
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
Comes easy to him, and tho' he trip and fall
He shall not blind his soul with clay.'"

l. 84. **A sister whom he loved.** The most constant and most helpful of all Byron's friends was his sister, Augusta; he loved her in the highest and noblest sense, and praised her in passionate verse. Cf. *Stanzas to Augusta:* —

"When fortune changed and love fled far,
And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
Thou wert the solitary star
Which rose and set not to the last."

In a second poem under the same title as the above, he says: —

"In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*."

Cf. *Epistle to Augusta:* —

"Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
No tears, but tenderness to answer mine;
Go where I will, to me thou art the same —
A loved regret which I would not resign.
There yet are two things in my destiny —
A world to roam through, and a home with thee."

l. 98. **Without a sigh he left.** Contrast Cowper's feeling in *The Task*, II., 206 *et al.*: —

"England, with all thy faults, I love thee still,
My country! and, while yet a nook is left
Where English minds and manners may be found,
Shall be constrained to love thee. . . .
And I can feel
Thy follies, too, and with a just disdain
Frown at effeminates, whose very looks
Reflect dishonour on the land I love."

Cf. Wordsworth: —

"I travelled among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee."

l. 99. **Paynim.** Pagan.

ll. 106–108. **nor from his lips,** etc. Cf. Burns's *Farewell to the Banks of Ayr* for contrasted feelings: —

> "But round my heart the ties are bound,
> That heart transpierc'd with many a wound;
> These bleed afresh, these ties I tear,
> To leave the bonnie banks of Ayr."

l. 114. **And tuned his farewell.** Cf. *The Corsair*, I., 1–4: —

> "O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,
> Our thoughts as boundless, and our hearts as free,
> Far as the breeze can bear the billows' foam,
> Survey our Empire and behold our home."

ll. 118–125. **Adieu,** etc. Byron says in his Preface, p. xxvii, that this song was suggested by "Lord Maxwell's Good Night," in Scott's *Border Minstrelsy*. It begins as follows: —

> "Adieu, madame, my mother dear,
> But and my sisters three!
> Adieu, fair Robert of Orchardstane!
> My heart is wae for thee.
> Adieu, the lily and the rose,
> The primrose fair to see!
> Adieu, my lady, and only joy!
> For I may not stay with thee."

l. 133. **My dog howls at the gate.** On the death of his pet dog, Boatswain, he wrote the following — part of an inscription — on the monument which he placed in the garden at Newstead: —

> "To mark a friend's remains these stones arise;
> I never knew but one, — and here he lies."

Cf. Arnold, *Geist's Grave* and *Kaiser Dead*.

l. 134. **my little page.** This was Robert Rushton, the son of one of Byron's tenants. He was so homesick that on reaching Gibraltar Byron sent him back to England under charge of his old servant, Joe Murray. Byron loved the boy and once said to his mother, "I like him, because, like myself, he seems a friendless

animal." Originally Byron introduced the page and yeoman as follows: —

"And of his train there was a henchman page,
A peasant boy, who served his master well;
And often would his pranksome prate engage
Childe Harold's ear, when his proud heart did swell
With sable thoughts that he disdained to tell.
Then would he smile on him, and Alwin smiled,
When aught that from his young lips archly fell
The gloomy film from Harold's eye beguiled,
And pleased for a glimpse appeared the woful Childe.

"Him and one yeoman only did he take
To travel eastward to a far countrie;
And though the boy was grieved to leave the lake
On whose fair banks he grew from infancy,
Eftsoons his little heart beat merrily
With hope of foreign nations to behold,
And many things right marvellous to see,
Of which our vaunting voyagers oft have told
In many a tome as true as Mandeville's of old."

l. 157. In the Ms. following this line is the stanza: —

"My mother is a high-born dame,
And much misliketh me;
She saith my riot bringeth shame
On all my ancestry:
I had a sister once, I ween,
Whose tears perhaps will flow;
But her fair face I have not seen
For three long years or moe."

l. 158. **yeoman.** William Fletcher, the poet's valet, followed him in all his wanderings, was with him when he died at Missolonghi, and accompanied his remains to England.

l. 160. **French foeman.** England was at war with France at the time.

l. 167. **the bordering lake.** Cf. *Epistle to Augusta*: —

"I did remind thee of our own dear Lake
By the old Hall which may be mine no more."

Cf. *Don Juan*, XIII., stanza 57 : —

"Before the mansion lay a lucid lake,
Broad as transparent, deep, and freshly fed
By a river, which its softened way did take
In currents through the calmer water spread
Around: the wild fowl nestled in the brake
And sedges, brooding in their liquid bed;
The woods sloped downwards to its brink, and stood
With their green faces fixed upon the flood."

ll. 170–177. These lines in Ms. were : —

"Enough, enough, my yeoman good,
All this is well to say;
But, if I in thy sandals stood,
I'd laugh to get away.

"For who would trust a paramour,
Or e'en a wedded fere,
Though her blue eyes were streaming o'er,
And torn her yellow hair?"

The following was suppressed between stanzas ix and x : —

"Methinks it would my bosom glad
To change my proud estate,
And be again a laughing lad
With one beloved playmate.
Since youth I scarce have passed an hour
Without disgust or pain,
Except sometimes in lady's bower,
Or when the bowl I drain."

ll. 190–191. **With thee, my bark**, etc. Alluding to the wild spirit in Byron, Taine says, "This relish of danger and craving for strife urged forward the Scandinavian Berserkirs, when in an open bark, under a sky cloven with lightning, they launched out upon the tempest whose fury they had breathed."

l. 203. **Tagus.** Tradition called the river *Aurifer*, gold-bearing.

l. 205. **Lusian.** Portuguese. Lusitania is the classical name for Portugal.

l. 207. **Oh, Christ!** etc. Cf. Coleridge, *Ancient Mariner*, 123: —

"O Christ!
That ever this should be!"

Cf. Tennyson, *Maud:* —

"Ah Christ, that it were possible
For one short hour to see
The souls we loved," etc.

l. 215. **Gaul's locust host.** French under Napoleon invaded Portugal in the fall of 1807.

l. 216. Dallas says: "The beautiful stanzas from xvi to xxx are the exact echoes of the thoughts which occurred to Byron's mind as he went over the spot described." **Lisboa.** Lisbon.

l. 220. **since Albion was allied.** In the summer of 1808 Wellington went to Portugal, and defeated the French. He was recalled; and his successor, Dalrymple, made a humiliating agreement by which the French general could evacuate Portugal, at a time when his army was almost annihilated, and his troops be conveyed in British vessels. This was known as the "Convention of Cintra." Wellington was again appointed to command, and drove the French out of Portugal in 1809, the year of Byron's visit.

Wordsworth was so indignant at this agreement that in May, 1809, he wrote his famous tract on *The Convention of Cintra*, Prose Works, Vol. I.: "This ought to have been first, both in order and importance: the French were to be subdued, their ferocious warfare and heinous policy to be confounded; and in this way and no other was the deliverance of that country [Portugal] to be accomplished."

l. 233. **shent.** Disgraced.

l. 236. **Cintra's glorious Eden.** In a letter to his mother Byron says: "To make amends for the filthiness of Lisbon and its still filthier inhabitants, the village of Cintra, about fifteen miles from the capital, is, perhaps, in every respect, the most delightful in Europe; it contains beauties of every description, natural and artificial. Palaces and gardens rising in the midst of rocks, cata-

racts, and precipices; convents on stupendous heights; a distant view of the sea and the Tagus."

l. 241. **the bard.** Dante. The reference is to the *Paradiso.*

l. 255. **Our Lady . . . of woe.** *Nossa Senora de peña.* Byron misread the last word as *pena*, pain. *Peña*, with the mark over the *n*, means a stone. Honorius, a mediæval saint, practised austerities there; and Byron, when he found out his error, declined to correct it, saying, "I may well assume the other sense, from the severity practised." — KEENE.

l. 259. **yon cave.** "Cork Convent, where Honorius dug his den, over which is his epitaph." — BYRON.

l. 275. **Vathek.** William Beckford, author of the romance *Vathek*, resided in Cintra for two years.

ll. 277–278. **When wanton Wealth**, etc. The Ms. has —

> "When Wealth and Taste their worst and best have done,
> Meek Peace pollution's lure voluptuous still must shun."

ll. 285–287. **Fresh lessons**, etc. For a similar picture of the blighting effect of despotism on man and nature, see Landor, *Hellenics:* —

> "We are what suns and winds and waters make us;
> The mountains are our sponsors, and the rills
> Fashion and win their nursling with their smiles.
> But where the land is dim with tyranny,
> Their tiny pleasures take the place
> Of glories and of duties; as the feet
> Of fabled faeries when the sun goes down
> Trip o'er the grass where wrestlers strove to play."

l. 288. **the hall.** "The Convention of Cintra was signed in the palace of the Marchese Mariavala." — BYRON. The negotiations were carried on thirty miles from Cintra, but were finally ratified here. Cf. l. 298.

ll. 290–296. **a . . . fiend**, etc. The Spirit of Diplomacy.

l. 296. **Urchin.** Elf. Here for the spirit of protest in the people.

After this stanza the Ms. had the following: —

"In golden characters right well designed,
First on the list appeareth one 'Junot;'
Then certain other glorious names we find,
Which rhyme compelleth me to place below:
Dull victors! baffled by a vanquished foe,
Wheedled by conynge tongues of laurels due,
Stand, worthy of each other, in a row —
Sir Arthur, Harry, and the dizzard Hew
Dalrymple, seely wight, sore dupe of tother tew."

ll. 297–305. **Convention**, etc. This stanza (xxv) reveals something of the scorn of the people at the action of the English commander Dalrymple. It is somewhat oratorical, as Byron often is. Byron says, "My qualities were much more oratorical and martial than poetical; no one had the least notion that I should subside into poesy."

l. 301. **Here Folly**, etc. Instead of the remainder of this stanza, the Ms. reading was as follows: —

"For well I wot, when first the news did come
That Vimiera's field by Gaul was lost,
For paragraph ne paper scarce had room,
Such pæans teemed for our triumphant host
In Courier, Chronicle, and eke in Morning Post.

"But when Convention sent his handy-work,
Pens, tongues, feet, hands, combined in wild uproar;
Mayor, aldermen, laid down the uplifted fork;
The Bench of Bishops half forgot to snore;
Stern Cobbett, who for one whole week forebore
To question aught, once more with transport leapt,
And bit his devilish quill agen, and swore
With foe such treaty never should be kept,
Then burst the blatant beast, and roared, and raged, and — slept!

"Thus unto Heaven appealed the people: Heaven,
Which loves the lieges of our gracious king,
Decreed that, ere our generals were forgiven,
Inquiry should be held about the thing.

But Mercy cloaked the babes beneath her wing;
And as they spared our babes, so spared we them;
(Where was the pity of our sires for Byng?)
Yet knaves, not idiots, should the law condemn;
Then live, ye gallant knights! and bless your Judges' phlegm."

l. 314. **Where Scorn**, etc. When the matter was investigated by the English government, Dalrymple was censured by King George III. and superseded by another. "Our offences are unexpiated; and wanting light, we want strength." — WORDSWORTH, *Convention of Cintra.*

l. 323. **But as he gazed**, etc. "If Byron was struck hard by events, — events in the material or ideal sphere, — there came a resonant response; his strangely discordant powers were for the moment fused, and he uttered his feelings with incomparable energy and directness." — E. DOWDEN.

l. 324. **To horse!** Byron rode from Lisbon to Seville. He says: "The horses are excellent; we rode seventy miles a day."

l. 333. **Yet Mafra.** Byron was entertained at one of the convents here, and the monks asked him if there were any books in England.

l. 334. **Lusians' luckless queen.** At Mafra, about ten miles from Cintra, was the palace where Maria Francesca became insane, and at the time of the French invasion she was taken to Brazil.

l. 338. **Babylonian whore.** The Catholic Church.

l. 340. **That men forget**, etc. Cf. Milton, *On the Late Massacre in Piedmont.*

ll. 349–350. **there is sweetness**, etc. Cf. Cowper, *The Task*, VI., 84–86: —

"Meditation here
May think down hours to moments. Here the heart
May give a useful lesson to the head."

Cf. Wordsworth, *Excursion*, 1 : —

> "There littleness was not; the least of things
> Seem'd infinite; and there his spirit shaped
> Her prospects, nor did he believe, he *saw*.
> What wonder if his being thus became
> Sublime and comprehensive!"

l. 358. **For Spain is compassed,** etc. Wellington had been checked, and Napoleon had made his brother Joseph king of Spain. Cf. Wordsworth, *Indignation of a High-Minded Spaniard* : —

> "We can endure that he should waste our lands,
> Despoil our temples, and by sword and flame
> Return us to the dust from which we came;
> Such food a Tyrant's appetite demands :
> And we can brook the thought that by his hands
> Spain may be overpowered, and he possess,
> For his delight, a solemn wilderness
> Where all the brave lie dead. But, when of bands
> Which he will break for us he dares to speak,
> Of benefits, and of a future day
> When our enlightened minds shall bless his sway;
> *Then*, the strained heart of fortitude proves weak:
> Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks declare
> That he has power to inflict what we lack strength to bear."

l. 360. **Lusitania . . . Sister.** Portugal and Spain.

l. 363. **Tayo.** The Tagus.

l. 369. **silver streamlet** A branch of the Guadiana, which flows between the two kingdoms.

l. 377. **Lusian slave.** The Spaniards looked down upon the Portuguese.

l. 378. **But ere,** etc. The Ms. has —

> "But ere the bonds of Spain have far been passed,
> Forever famed in many a sacred song."

l. 385. **The Paynim turban,** etc. Alluding to wars of Moors and Christians in the Middle Ages.

l. 388. **Pelagio.** Pelago, king of northern Spain. He defeated the Moors.

l. 389. **traitor-sire.** Count Julian, who, to avenge the indignity done his daughter Cava, by King Roderick, invited the Moors to invade Spain.

l. 390. **Gothic gore.** The Goths then ruled in Spain.

l. 394. **Red gleamed,** etc. The red cross was the standard of the Christians. Cf. Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, I., 2, 1 : —

> "And on his breast a bloudie crosse he bore,
> The deare remembrance of his dying Lord."

l. 399. **A peasant's plaint,** etc. A simple, mournful ballad keeps the memory of his deeds alive.

ll. 409–410. **smoke of blazing bolts,** etc. Contrasted with the old methods of warfare. Cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, VI., 610. Alluding to their victory, due to the invention of guns and gunpowder, Satan says : —

> "To entertain them fair with *open front*
> And breast (what could we more?) *propounded* terms
> Of *composition*," etc.

and again : —

> "The terms we sent were terms of *weight*
> Of *hard contents* and *full* of force *urged home*
> Such as we might perceive amused them all
> And *stumbled* many," etc.

l. 413. **When her war-song,** etc. Alluding to the wars with the Moors.

l. 419. **from rock to rock.** The Ms. gives : —

> "from rock to rock
> Blue columns soar aloft in sulphurous wreath,
> Fragments on fragments in confusion knock," etc.

l. 430. **this morn,** etc. The battle of Talavera, July 26th, 1809, lasted three days, in which Wellington and the Spaniards stood against the French. Cf. l. 448.

ll. 459–467. **Oh, Albuera,** etc. This stanza was written after Byron's return to England. In this battle the English and Spanish routed the French who were going to the relief of their comrades whom Wellington was besieging in Badajos.

l. 480. **Soon,** etc. The French entered Seville in February, 1810, after Byron was there.

l. 499. **star.** Venus, the star of love.

l. 500. **Fandango.** A Spanish dance.

ll. 502–503. **Not in the toils,** etc. Cf. Wordsworth, *Sonnet on Buonaparte:* —

> "'Tis not in battles that from youth we train
> The Governor who must be wise and good."

l. 508. '**Vivã el Rey**!' Long live the king, Ferdinand.

l. 509. **Godoy.** Prime minister of Charles IV. Cf. l. 510.

l. 523. **badge.** The red cockade of the naturalist party.

ll. 531–539. This stanza shows Wellington's defences on the mountain Sierra Morena in south of Spain to check French advance.

l. 540. **deeds to come.** In the spring of 1811 Wellington advanced from his position and drove the French out of Portugal. Cf. Tennyson's *Ode on the death of the Duke of Wellington.* Professor Dowden says of *Childe Harold,* "As we read the poem we assist at the rise and fall of empires, in the court, the camp, the council-chamber."

l. 550. **bloated Chief.** Cf. Wordsworth, *Sonnet on Buonaparte:* —

> "The tenderest mood
> Of that man's mind, — what can it be? what food
> Fed his first hopes?"

l. 558. **Spanish maid.** Augustina, who when her lover was killed at Saragossa worked the gun in his place. Byron saw her on the Prado, wearing her decorations. Cf. Wordsworth, sonnet.

> "Hail Zaragosa! If with unwet eye
> We can approach, thy sorrow to behold,

Yet is the heart not pitiless nor cold;
Such spectacle demands not tear or sigh.
These desolate remains are trophies high
Of more than martial courage in the breast
Of peaceful civic virtue; they attest
Thy matchless worth to all posterity."

l. 574. **Gorgon face.** That terrifies the beholder so that he turns to stone.

l. 576. **Her lover sinks.** Cf. Wordsworth, *Vaudracour and Julia.*

l. 592. **Remoter females.** English women?

l. 612. **Oh, thou Parnassus!** These stanzas were written at Castri, at the foot of Parnassus.

l. 638. **melodious wave.** Cf. l. 5, note.

l. 646. **deathless plant.** The bay laurel into which Daphne was transformed when pursued by Apollo. Cf. Wordsworth, *Russian Fugitive*, Part III.

l. 658. **site of ancient days.** "Seville was the Hispalis of the Romans." — Byron.

l. 666. **Paphos.** In the island of Cyprus, sacred to Venus.

l. 669. **native sea.** Legend says Venus sprang from the sea.

l. 693. **seventh day.** Rather the first day.

l. 699. Suburban towns. Byron was educated at Harrow.

l. 704. **Richmond-hill.** On the Thames, nine miles from London. Ware is twenty miles north of London.

l. 705. **steep of Highgate.** Highgate hill, near Hampstead, opposite Brentford.

l. 706. **Bœotian shades.** This was written at Thebes.

l. 707. **worship of the solemn Horn.** Alluding to the old custom at the inns of Highgate of taking a burlesque oath upon a pair of horns never to kiss the maid when one could the mistress, never to eat brown bread when one could get white, etc.

l. 720–782. **The lists are oped**, etc. This description is a splendid illustration of Ruskin's "Imagination Associative," *Modern Painters*, Vol. II., part iii.

l. 739. **Matadore.** The skilled bull-fighter.

ll. 814–818. **And lately**, etc. For contrast see Coleridge, *Love:* —

> "All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
> Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
> All are but ministers of Love,
> And feed his sacred flame."

TO INEZ

This song was written at Athens in January, 1810. Its sentiment is a striking contrast to that in the previous farewell song, and we cannot feel that Byron is posing; the misery is genuine. The Inez of the song is not known.

In place of this song the first draught had seven stanzas, of which the following is a sample: —

> "O never talk again to me
> Of northern climes and British ladies!
> It has not been your lot to see,
> Like me, the lovely girl of Cadiz.
> Although her eyes be not of blue,
> Nor fair her locks, like English lasses;
> How far its own expressive hues
> The languid azure eye surpasses."

ll. 845–848. **It is not love**, etc. Cf. *Giaour:* —

> "My days though few have passed below
> In much of joy but more of woe;
> Yet still in hours of love or strife,
> I've 'scaped the weariness of life;
> Now leagued with friends, now girt by foes,
> I loathed the languor of repose."

ll. 858–860. **To zones**, etc. Ms. has —

> "To other zones, howe'er remote,
> Still, still pursuing clings to me
> The blight of life — the demon Thought."

l. 879. **A traitor.** Solano, governor of Cadiz, when in May, 1808, he was ordered to attack the French squadron in the harbor, refused, and was killed by the people.

l. 884. **Kingless people.** Napoleon deposed Ferdinand VII. and put his brother Joseph on the throne.

l. 899. In the Ms. this canto was followed by these stanzas: —

"Ye who would more of Spain and Spaniards know,
Sights, Saints, Antiques, Arts, Anecdotes, and War,
Go, hie ye hence to Paternoster Row[1] —
Are they not written in the book of Carr,[2]
Green Erin's knight and Europe's wandering star?
Then listen, readers, to the Man of Ink,
Hear what he did, and sought, and wrote afar;
All these are cooped within one quarto's brink,
This borrow, steal, — don't buy, — and tell us what you think.

"There may you read, with spectacles on eyes,
How many Wellesleys did embark for Spain,
As if they therein meant to colonize,
How many troops y-crossed the laughing main
That ne'er beheld the same return again:
How many buildings are in such a place,
How many leagues from this to yonder plain,
How many relics each cathedral grace,
And where Giralda stands on her gigantic base.[3]

"There you may read (O Phœbus, save Sir John,
That these my words prophetic may not err!)
All that was said, or sung, or lost, or won,
By vaunting Wellesley or by blundering Frere,

[1] A booksellers' street in London.

[2] Sir John Carr, author of *Descriptive Travels in Spain*, etc.

[3] The *Giralda* is the Moorish tower of the cathedral at Seville. It is surmounted by a female figure in bronze,

He that wrote half the 'Needy Knife-Grinder.'[1]
Thus poesy the way to grandeur paves, —
Who would not such diplomatists prefer?
But cease, my Muse, thy speed some respite craves,
Leave legates to their house and armies to their graves.

"Yet here of Vulpes[2] mention may be made,
Who for the Junta modelled sapient laws,
Taught them to govern ere they were obeyed:
Certes, fit teacher to command, because
His soul Socratic no Xantippe awes;
Blest with a dame in Virtue's bosom nurst, —
With her let silent admiration pause!
True to her second husband and her first:
On such mistaken fame let Satire do her worst!"

l. 915. **Columbia's ease.** Napoleon's tyranny in Spain resulted in the independence of the Spanish colonies in America.

l. 916. **wrongs.** During the Spanish conquest under Pizarro.

ll. 918–921. **Talavera.** Cf. 430, note.

l. 919. **marvels of Barossa's fight.** In the battle fought near Cadiz in 1811 the English fought gallantly.

l. 920. **Albuera.** Cf. 459, note.

l. 927. **my friend.** Hon. John Wingfield of the Coldstream Guards, who died at Coimbra, Portugal, May 14, 1811. Byron says: "I had known him ten years, the better half of his life, and the happiest part of mine. In the short space of one month I had lost *her* who gave me being, and most of those who had made that being tolerable. To me the lines of Young are no fiction: —

'Insatiate archer! could not one suffice?
Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain
And thrice ere thrice yon moon had filled her horn.'

I should have ventured a verse to the memory of the late Charles Skinner Matthews, Fellow of Downing College, Cambridge, were

[1] Written by Canning and Frere.

[2] *Vulpes* refers to *Fox*, Lord Holland. Lady Holland had been the wife of Sir Godfrey Webster, who had obtained a divorce from her because of her intimacy with Fox.

he not too much above all praise of mine." Matthews was drowned while bathing in the Cam, Aug. 2, 1811. This stanza and the next were added in that month.

CANTO SECOND

This canto, begun at Janina, was completed at Smyrna, March 28, 1809.

l. 1. **blue-eyed maid.** Athena. The Homeric epithet is γλαυκῶπις, bright-eyed.

l. 2. **Didst never yet,** etc. Why does Byron deny Athena inspiration of poets? Cf. Tennyson, *The Poet:* —

> "No sword of wrath her right arm whirl'd,
> But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his* words
> She shook the world."

l. 3. **thy temple.** The Parthenon.

l. 4. **war and wasting fire.** Part of the Acropolis was destroyed by the cannon of the Venetians, 1687.

l. 7. **dominion dire.** Of the Mussulmans, who held possession at the time Byron wrote.

ll. 10–18. **Ancient of days,** etc. Byron had his first glimpse of Athens on Christmas, 1809, and wrote these famous lines. One of the wisest of modern tributes to the mind and art of Greece is Professor Butcher's *Some Aspects of Greek Genius.* Matthew Arnold, in *Culture and Anarchy*, chapter iv., says, "As the great movement of Christianity was a triumph of Hebraism and man's moral impulses, so the great movement which goes by the name of the Renaiscence was an uprising and reinstatement of man's intellectual impulses and of Hellenism."

l. 19. **Son of the morning.** There is some doubt as to what the poet referred to here. It seems addressed to the Oriental who was then the possessor of the sacred land.

l. 21. **a nation's sepulchre.** The poet is standing among the ruins of the temple of Zeus.

l. 32. **Thou know'st not**, etc. Wordsworth, alluding to the materialism of modern life, says: —

> "Great God! I'd rather be
> A pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
> Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
> Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn."

l. 37. **Or burst**, etc. This should be connected with line 20. The Hero may be Ajax, buried in Troas. Byron says, "It was not always the custom of the Greeks to burn their dead; the greater Ajax in particular was interred entire."

l. 46. **Look on its broken arch**, etc. This stanza should be compared with Hamlet's meditation on the skull of poor Yorick: —

> "Imperial Cæsar, dead and turn'd to clay,
> Might stop a hole to keep the wind away."

l. 56. **nothing can be known.** This is hardly true of Socrates. Professor Jowett says, "He falls back on resignation to the divine will, and the certainty that no evil can happen to the good man either in life or death." Possibly Byron had in mind Socrates' reason why he was wiser than many others. He said he knew nothing, and knew he knew nothing; while they knew nothing, and did not know that they knew nothing.

l. 66. **Sadducee.** Cf. Matt. xxii. 23.

ll. 68–69. **How sweet it were**, etc. Cf. William Watson, *Lachrimæ Musarum*, on the death of Tennyson: —

> "Rapt though he be from us,
> Virgil salutes him and Theocritus;
> Catullus, mightiest brained Lucretius, each
> Greets him, their brother on the Stygian beach;
> Proudly a gaunt right hand doth Dante reach;
> Milton and Wordsworth bid him welcome home;
> Bright Keats to touch his raiment doth beseech;
> Coleridge, his locks aspersed with fairy foam,

Calm Spenser, Chaucer suave,
His equal friendship crave;
And godlike spirits hail him guest, in speech
Of Athens, Florence, Stratford, Weimar, Rome."

l. 72. **Bactrian, . . . Samian.** Zoroaster and Pythagoras. In the place of this stanza the Ms. has: —

"Frown not upon me, churlish priest, that I
Look not for life where life may never be;
I am no sneerer at thy phantasy:
Thou pitiest me — alas! I envy thee,
Thou bold discoverer in an unknown sea
Of happy isles and happier tenants there;
I ask thee not to prove a Sadducee;
Still dream of Paradise, thou knows't not where,
But lov'st too well to bid thine erring brother share."

l. 73. **There, thou!** etc. This stanza was written at Newstead after Byron's return. Long, Wingfield, Matthews, Eddlestone, and his mother had died within a period of four months. By many it is thought to refer to his Cambridge friend Eddlestone, although Byron wrote to Dallas that it did not refer to any *male* friend. It may refer to the unknown woman Thyrza, in whose memory he wrote five poems.

l. 78. Cf. *Lines to Thyrza*: —

"For wert thou banished from my mind,
Where could my vacant bosom turn?"

l. 82. **upon this massy stone.** "The temple of Jupiter Olympius, of which sixteen columns entirely of marble yet remain." — Byron.

l. 91. **yon fane.** The Parthenon.

l. 94. **dull spoiler.** Lord Elgin, who removed many of the sculptures to the British Museum. Byron is unnecessarily severe upon the lord, for at that time these works of noble art were allowed to go unprotected. To his work in taking them to a place of safety the modern art of sculpture has been greatly indebted. Byron gives the pathetic incident in connection with the removal

of the last of the metopes. When the work was completed a Greek workman who was assisting took his pipe from his mouth, and wiping away the tears, said "τέλος!"

l. 95. **Blush Caledonia.** Lord Elgin was a Scotchman, but then Byron says of himself: —

"But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred
A whole one; and my heart flies to my head
As 'Auld Lang Syne' brings Scotland one and all,
Scotch plaids, Scotch snoods, the blue hills and clear streams."

Cf. *The Curse of Minerva:* —

"Frown not on England; England owns him not,
Athena, no! thy plunderer was a Scot.
Ask'st thou the difference? From fair Phyle's towers
Survey Bœotia, — Caledonia ours."

l. 99. **long-reluctant brine.** The ship which bore the treasures to England was delayed by storms.

l. 109. After this stanza Ms. has —

"Come then, ye classic Thanes of each degree,
Dark Hamilton and sullen Aberdeen,[1]
Come pilfer all the Pilgrim loves to see,
All that yet consecrates the fading scene:
O, better were it ye had never been,
Nor ye, nor Elgin, nor that baser wight,
The victim sad of vase-collecting spleen,
House-furnisher withal, one Thomas hight,
Than ye should bear one stone from wronged Athena's site!

"Or will the gentle Dilettanti crew
Now delegate the task to digging Gell?[2] —
That mighty limner of a bird's-eye view;
How like to nature let his volumes tell:

[1] William Hamilton, the antiquary, whose collection of vases is now in the British Museum; Lord Aberdeen figures in the *English Bards*. *Thomas*, mentioned below, was Thomas Hope, who wrote a work on furniture before he became better known as the author of *Anastasius*, which some attributed to Byron.

[2] Sir William Gell, the archæologist. Cf. *English Bards:* "I leave topography to *classic* Gell."

Who can with him the folio's limits swell
With all the author saw, or said he saw?
Who can topographize or delve so well?
No boaster he, nor impudent and raw,
His pencil, pen, and shade, alike without a flaw."

l. 118. **Where was thine Ægis**, etc. "According to Zozimus, Minerva and Achilles frightened Alaric from the Acropolis; but others relate that the Gothic king was nearly as mischievous as the Scottish peer." — Byron.

Scott and Byron met in 1815. Scott says: "Like the old heroes in Homer we exchanged gifts; I gave Byron a beautiful dagger mounted with gold, which had been the property of the redoubtable Elfi Bey. But I was to play the part of Diomed in the *Iliad*, for Byron sent me a large sepulchral vase of silver, full of dead men's bones, found within the land walls of Athens."

l. 144. **And left without a sigh**, etc. When Byron was in Athens he lodged at the house of the English vice-consul, who had three daughters, the eldest of whom, Theresa, is immortalized as the *Maid of Athens* in Byron's famous song. Cf. *Maid of Athens:* —

"Athens holds my heart and soul;
Can I cease to love thee? no!
Ζώη μοῦ σάς ἀγαπῶ."

ll. 170–171. **Britons rarely swerve from law**, etc. Cf. Tennyson, *Of old sat Freedom on the heights:* —

"That her fair form may stand and shine,
Make bright our days and light our dreams,
Turning to scorn with lips divine
The falsehood of extremes."

Cf. *You ask me why, tho' ill at ease:* —

"A land of settled government,
A land of just and old renown,
Where Freedom broadens down
From precedent to precedent."

l. 185. **some rude Arion's restless hand.** Alluding to the legend of the minstrel Arion who, when he was to be thrown into the sea

by the sailors who wanted his property, sang his song so sweetly that the dolphins came and bore him to the shore.

l. 190. **Calpe's straits.** Gibraltar. Calpe was the ancient name of the rock.

l. 193. **Hecate's blaze.** The moon.

l. 199. **'Tis night,** etc. Byron's meditative mood is characteristically by the pale moonlight.

l. 201. The Ms. has: —

> "Bleeds the lone heart, once boundless in its zeal,
> And friendless now, yet dreams it had a friend."

ll. 203–216. **Who, with the weight of years,** etc. "The richest pages of Byron's work, from the date of *The Curse of Minerva* to that of the *Isles of Greece*, are brightened by lights and adorned by allusions due to his training, imperfect as it was, on the slopes of Harrow." — JOHN NICHOL.

Cf. *On a distant view of the Village and School of Harrow on the Hill*: —

> "Ye scenes of my childhood, whose loved recollection
> Embitters the present compared with the past;
> Where science first dawn'd on the powers of reflection,
> And friendships were form'd, too romantic to last."

Cf. *Childish Recollections*: —

> "Scenes of my youth, developed, crowd to view,
> To which I long have bade a last adieu!
> Seats of delight, inspiring youthful themes,
> Friends lost to me for aye, except in dreams."

Cf. *I would I were a careless Child*: —

> "I loved — but those I loved are gone;
> Had friends — my early friends are fled;
> How cheerless feels the heart alone
> When all its former hopes are dead."

ll. 217–225. **To sit on rocks,** etc. Some one has said that Byron interpreted Wordsworth to the world. Wordsworth had defined poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling in lan-

guage direct from the heart." Such is the best work of Byron. In such passages as this we see how truly Byron was allied to Wordsworth in his love of nature. It is a distinct advance upon the aspects of nature in Canto I. Cf. Wordsworth, *By the Side of Grasmere Lake:* —

> "Clouds, lingering yet, extend in solid bars
> Through the gray west; and lo! these waters, steeled
> By breezeless air to smoothest polish, yield
> A vivid repetition of the stars;
> Jove, Venus, and the ruddy crest of Mars
> Amid his fellows beauteously revealed
> At happy distance from earth's groaning field,
> Where ruthless mortals wage incessant wars.
> Is it a mirror? — or the nether Sphere
> Opening to view the abyss in which she feeds,
> Her own calm fires? But list! a voice is near;
> Great Pan himself low-whispering through the reeds,
> 'Be thankful, thou; for, if unholy deeds
> Ravage the world, tranquillity is here!'"

ll. 229–232. **With none who bless us,** etc. Here Byron's loneliness, the pathos of his life, reaches its highest manifestation.

Hon. G. F. Hoar, in an address, *Old Age and Immortality*, says: "The greater penalty of growing old is the loss of the friends of youth; . . . when the voices that were its music are silent it is well that the ear grow numb. When the faces which were their delight have vanished it is well that the eyes grow dim."

l. 236. **lonely Athos.** The great centre and seat of monasticism, much higher than the neighboring peaks, stood sentinel over the blue Ægean. Cf. Wordsworth, *Prelude*, IV., 354–364: —

> "When from our better selves we have too long
> Been parted by the hurrying world, and droop
> Sick of its business, of its pleasures tired,
> How gracious, how benign, is Solitude;
> How potent a mere image of her sway;
> Most potent when impressed upon the mind
> With an appropriate human centre — hermit,
> Deep in the bosom of the wilderness;

Votary (in vast cathedral, where no foot
Is treading, where no other face is seen)
Kneeling at prayers."

ll. 253–260. **Calypso's isles**, etc. Goza. When Ulysses was stranded on the island of Calypso, she endeavored to allure him to become her husband. Cf. Homer, *Odyssey*, Book I. : —

"Him alone, who pined to see his home
And wife again, Calypso, queenly nymph,
Great among goddesses, detained within
Her spacious grot, in hope that he might yet
Become her husband."

Telemachus went in search of his father, and his tutor, Mentor, pushed him from the height into the sea, because he was afraid he would become fascinated of Calypso. She in turn retired to her cave and spent her life in lamentation. Cf. *Télémaque*, VI., by Fénelon.

l. 266. **Sweet Florence**, etc. Byron remained at Malta for three weeks, during which time he developed a Platonic friendship for Mrs. Spencer Smith, the wife of the English minister to Constantinople. She was sister-in-law of the famous admiral and the heroine of several exciting adventures. She had been shipwrecked, and she had excited the vengeance of Napoleon, and Byron says: "Buonaparte is even now so incensed against her that her life would be in danger if she were taken prisoner." Cf. *To Florence : —*

"Ah who would think that form had past
Through Danger's most destructive path,
Had braved the death-wing'd tempest's blast,
And 'scaped a tyrant's fiercer wrath."

Cf. *Stanzas composed during a Thunderstorm : —*

"Do thou, amid the fair white walls,
If Cadiz yet be free,
At times from out her latticed halls
Look o'er the dark blue sea;
Then think upon Calypso's isles,
Endear'd by days gone by;
To others give a thousand smiles,
To me a single sigh."

ll. 289–294. **Little knew she,** etc. Byron here assumes the tone of the early stanzas of Canto I.

ll. 309–311. **When all is won,** etc. The cynicism of the previous stanza is matched by the pessimism of these lines. Cf. Tennyson, *Vastness:* —

"Pain, that hath crawl'd from the corpse of Pleasure, a worm which writhes all day, and at night
Stirs up again in the heart of the sleeper, and stings him back to the curse of the light."

For a contrast to Byron's pessimism here, cf. Tennyson's *Wages:* —

"The wages of sin is death: if the wages of Virtue be dust,
Would she have heart to endure for the life of the worm and the fly?
She desires no isles of the blest, no quiet seats of the just,
To rest in a golden grove, or to bask in a summer sky;
Give her the wages of going on, and not to die."

ll. 325–329. **Dear Nature,** etc. From the heat of passion Byron could turn to nature and find cooling shade. Cf. Wordsworth, *Lines on Tintern Abbey:* —

"Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy."

l. 334. **Iskander.** Turkish for Alexander. He led a successful rebellion against the Turks. His namesake, Scandeberg, called Lord Alexander, was descended from the old kings of Albania. Dowden calls *Childe Harold* "a glorified guide-book." It is as distinctly dedicated to the cause of liberty as were the famous sonnets of Wordsworth.

ll. 343–344. **passed the barren spot . . . Penelope,** etc. Ithaca, the home of Ulysses. Byron left Malta September 21, 1809, and after touching at Patras landed at Previsa, on the Albanian coast, September 29. Cf. *Lines written in an Album at Malta:* —

"As o'er the cold sepulchral stone,
Some name arrests the passer-by;

Thus when thou view'st this page alone,
May mine extract thy pensive eye.

"And when by thee that name is read,
Perchance in some succeeding year,
Reflect on me as on the dead,
And think my heart is buried here."

ll. 345–354. **the mount**, etc. Leucadia, now Santa Maura. "From the promontory (Lover's Leap) Sappho is said to have thrown herself." — Byron. Cf. *Don Juan*, Canto II., ccv.: —

"Leucadia's rock still overlooks the wave."

l. 356. **Actium, Lepanto, fatal Trafalgar.** "Actium and Trafalgar need no further mention. The battle of Lepanto, equally bloody and considerable, but less known, was fought in the Gulf of Patras; here the author of *Don Quixote* lost his left hand." — Byron.

l. 368. **And, sunk**, etc. The Ms. has —

"And roused him more from thought than he was wont,
While Pleasure almost seemed to smoothe his pallid front."

l. 371. **Suli.** Mountain district in Epirus. **Pindus.** Mountain chain in the interior.

l. 381. **shore unknown.** "Circumstances, of little consequence to mention, led Mr. Hobhouse and myself into that country before we visited any other part of the Ottoman dominions; and with the exception of Major Leake, then officially resident at Joannina, no other Englishmen have ever advanced beyond the capital into the interior, as that gentleman very lately assured me." — Byron.

l. 388. **red cross.** Cf. Canto I., 404, note.

l. 397. **Ambracia's gulf.** Arta, the scene of the battle of Actium.

l. 398. **woman.** Cleopatra. Cf. Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act II., sc. 4: —

"A hand that kings
Have lipp'd, and trembled kissing."

l. 402. **second Cæsar's trophies rise.** "Nicopolis, whose ruins are most extensive, is at some distance from Actium, where the

wall of the Hippodrome survives in a few fragments." — Byron. It was built by Augustus in honor of his victory.

l. 405. **was thy globe ordained,** etc. Cf. Tennyson, *Faith:* —

"Doubt no longer that the Highest is the wisest and the best,
Let not all that saddens Nature blight thy hope and break thy rest."

l. 407. **Illyria's vales.** The east side of the Adriatic, included by Albania.

l. 415. **Acherusia's lake.** Near Suli.

l. 416. **primal city.** Janina, the capital. Here Byron began the second canto of *Childe Harold.*

l. 418. **Albania's chief.** Ali Pasha, Viceroy of the province, who entertained Byron. Byron says: "Ali looked on me as his son. Indeed, he treated me like a child, sending me almonds and sugared sherbet, fruit, and sweetmeats twenty times a day." He expelled the French, and ruled with severity, but often with justice.

l. 421. **mountain-band.** "Five thousand Suliotes, among the rocks and in the castle of Suli, withstood thirty thousand Albanians for eighteen years; the castle at last was taken by bribery." — Byron.

l. 424. **Zitza.** "The convent and village of Zitza are four hours' journey from Joannina, or Yanina, the capital of the Pachalick. In the valley the river Kalamas (once the Acheron) flows, and not far from Zitza forms a fine cataract. The situation is, perhaps, the finest in Greece, though the approach to Delvinachi and parts of Acarnania and Ætolia may contest the palm. Delphi, Parnassus, and, in Attica, even Cape Colonna and Port Raphti, are very inferior; as also every scene in Ionia or the Troad: I am almost inclined to add the approach to Constantinople; but from the different features of the last, a comparison can hardly be made." — Byron.

Cf. *Stanzas composed during a Thunderstorm,* written while Byron was crossing the mountains, having lost his guide: —

"Chill and mirk is the nightly blast,
Where Pindus' mountains rise;
And angry clouds are pouring fast
The vengeance of the skies.

"Our guides are gone, our hope is lost,
And lightnings as they play,
But show where rocks our path have crost,
Or gild the torrent's spray."

ll. 453–459. **Chimæra's alps**, etc. A spur of the Pindus, so called from the name of the town, Chimæra.

Acheron. The sacred river of the dead.

ll. 469–472. **Dodona**, etc. The site of the ancient oracle, discovered by a Greek archæologist, not far from Janina.

ll. 487–488. **Tomerit.** "Anciently Mount Tomarus." — Byron.

Laos. The mountain stream (Aous), modern Viosa.

l. 492. **Tepalen.** The birthplace and residence of Ali Pasha.

l. 496. **Haram.** Private apartments of the chief.

l. 518. **cap of terror.** Peculiar sheepskin helmet worn by the Turkish horsemen.

l. 520. **mutilated son.** Eunuch. African negroes who guarded Turkish ladies.

l. 530. **Muezzin's call.** This crier gives the call to prayer five times a day. "God is great. I testify that there is no God but God, and Muhamad is his prophet." — Byron.

l. 532. **Ramazani's fast.** The ninth month of the Moslem year, which begins with the new moon. The fast is kept from dawn to sunset. It was in this month that Byron was there.

ll. 543–549. **She yields to one**, etc. It is in such lines as these that the true Byron is revealed. Here he is not posing; the thoughts escape ere he is aware. We must remember, too, that when he wrote these lines he did not think of publishing them.

ll. 554–567. **Ali reclined.** Ali boasted, in a letter to Byron written in 1813, that he had lately murdered six hundred persons in cold blood. The poet had a just prevision of the end of such a career. Ali was decapitated in the very palace where he had received Byron. The poet says: —

"He received me in a large room paved with marble; a fountain was playing in the centre; the apartment was surrounded by scarlet ottomans." — (*Letters*) KEENE.

ll. 561–562. **Hafiz . . . Teian.** Hafiz, a lyric poet, who flourished in the fourteenth century. Byron says: "The immortal Hafiz, the Oriental Anacreon."

Teian. "Anacreon, the poet of courtly festivity." — JEBB.

l. 568. **'Mid many things,** etc. Ms. has —

> "Childe Harold with the chief held colloquy,
> Yet what they spoke it boots not to repeat:
> Converse may little charm strange ear or eye;
> Albeit he rested on that spacious seat
> Of Moslem luxury, the choice retreat," etc.

ll. 586–589. **Childe Harold saw them,** etc. Cf. Wordsworth, *Prelude*, IX., 262–266: —

> "Meantime, day by day, the roads
> Were crowded with the bravest youth of France,
> And all the promptest of her spirits, linked
> In gallant soldiership, and posting on
> To meet the war upon her frontier bounds."

l. 593. **fellow-countrymen.** "Alluding to the wreckers of Cornwall." — BYRON.

l. 596. **Full on the coast.** This is actual history. Byron was nearly wrecked here in the vessel provided by Ali Pasha, and was befriended by the Albanians. Cf. Byron, *Letters*, Vol. I., edited by Henley. Dallas gives a splendid account of the generous treatment which Byron received at Ali's hands and from the Suliotes.

l. 620. **white Achelous' tide.** So called from the deposits of silt at its mouth, where stands the town Missolonghi, in which Byron died eleven years later.

l. 622. **Utraikey.** Village on bay of Leutraki, near Actium.

ll. 631–639. **On the smooth shore,** etc. Byron delighted in such a picture. Cf. Wordsworth, *Prelude*, VI., 396–405. The celebrations in France on its federal day : —

> "The supper done,
> With flowing cups elate and happy thoughts
> We rose at signal given, and formed a ring
> And, hand in hand, danced round and round the board;
> All hearts were open, every tongue was loud
> With amity and glee; we bore a name
> Honored in France, the name of Englishmen,
> And hospitably did they give us hail,
> As their forerunners in a glorious course;
> And round and round the board we danced again."

l. 648. **this lay.** Byron says, "These stanzas are partly taken from different Albinese songs, as far as I was able to make them out by the exposition of the Albinese in Romaic and Italian."

l. 649. **Tambourgi.** Turkish for drummer.

l. 652. **Chimariot.** Cf. l. 453, note.

l. 677. **Previsa fell.** In 1797 the French occupied the place, but Ali plundered the town the next year.

l. 686. **Giaours.** Russians.

horsetail. The standard of a Pasha. Cf. *The Giaour* : —

> "He came and went, like the Simoom,
> That harbinger of fate and gloom,
> Beneath whose widely wasting breath
> The very cypress droops to death."

l. 692. **Fair Greece,** etc. Cf. *The Giaour* : —

> "'Tis Greece, but loving Greece no more!
> So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
> We start, for soul is wanting there.
> Here is the loneliness in death,
> That parts not quite with parting breath."

Cf. *Don Juan*, Canto III. :

> "The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!
> Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
> Where grew the arts of war and peace, —
> Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung!
> Eternal summer gilds them yet,
> But all, except their sun, is set."

l. 702. **Phyle's brow.** The fort of Phyle was garrisoned by Thrasybulus against the Thirty Tyrants from Athens. Here Byron got his first view of Athens.

l. 723. **Gaul or Muscovite.** French or Russian.

l. 726. **Helots.** Spartan serfs.

l. 729. **city.** Constantinople.

Giaour. Here for Christian, as Allah is for Mohammedan.

l. 730. **Othman's race.** Ottomans.

l. 731. **tower.** The Seraglio, or palace of the Sultan.

l. 733. **Wahab's rebel brood.** The Arab Wahab revolted and seized Mecca and Medina.

l. 748. **Stamboul.** Turkish for Constantinople.

l. 749. **Sophia's shrine.** The mosque of St. Sophia, built as a Christian church.

l. 792. **Lacedemon's hardihood.** The Spartans.

l. 801. **how lovely,** etc. Cf. Wordsworth, *Address to Kilchurn Castle* : —

> "Oh! there is life that breathes not, powers there are
> That touch each other to the quick in modes
> Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
> No soul to dream of."

l. 812. **Tritonia's airy shrine.** The temple of Minerva, on the promontory of Colonna or Sunium.

l. 821. **olive.** The gift of Minerva to Attica.

l. 822. **Hymettus.** Mountain near Athens, famous for honey.

l. 826. **Mendeli's marbles.** Mount Pentelicus.

l. 836. **Athena's tower.** The Parthenon.

Marathon. "What then must be our feelings when standing on the tumulus of the two hundred (Greeks) who fell on Marathon? The principal barrow has recently been opened by Fauvel; few or no relics, as vases, etc., were found by the excavator. The plain of Marathon was offered to me for sale at the sum of sixteen thousand piastres, about nine hundred pounds! Alas!—'Expende—quot *libras* in duce summo—invenies?'—was the dust of Miltiades worth no more? It could scarcely have fetched less if sold by *weight*."—BYRON.

l. 848. **Mountains above.** Cf. *Don Juan*, III.:

"The mountains look on Marathon—
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And, musing there an hour alone,
I dreamed that Greece might still be free."

l. 855. **Yet to the remnants,** etc. Cf. *The Giaour* for similar pathos:—

"He who hath bent him o'er the dead
Ere the first day of death is fled,
. . . . . .
So fair, so calm, so softly seal'd,
The first last look by death reveal'd,
Such is the aspect of this shore;
'Tis Greece, but living Greece no more."

l. 864. The original Ms. concluded with this stanza. Byron wrote the rest after his return on the 2d of July, 1811.

l. 883. **inglorious lays.** He set no value on this poem, but thought the *Hints from Horace* should be published. Cf. Introductory note to Canto I.

l. 891. **Thou too art gone,** etc. Cf. *To Thyrza*:—

"Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
The cup of woe for me to drain:
If rest alone be in the tomb,
I would not wish thee here again.
. . . . . .

"Teach me — too early taught by thee:
To bear, forgiving and forgiven:
On earth thy love was such to me;
It fain would form my hope in heaven."

l. 905. **The parent, friend,** etc. We can understand the loneliness of this lonely man when we know that on his return the circle was narrowed by the death of his mother, his friends Long, Wingfield, Eddlestone, and Matthews, and this, to us, unknown Thyrza. On the receipt of a letter from Byron, his mother, who was ill, said, "If I should be dead before he comes what a strange thing it would be." She died without seeing him. Byron was so affected that he could not go to the funeral, but viewed the *cortège* from the abbey. He had supped full of horrors. There remained the faithful sister, and to her he turned.

l. 918. **What is the worst.** Hamlet-like, he stands where the atmosphere is stifling, and yet the sweet bells are not jangled, harsh, or out of tune, but yield their tenderest and saddest music. The strain here is in the same key as the early stanzas of *In Memoriam*. The sudden and unprecedented popularity of the *Childe Harold* turned the mourning into a strangely new and dizzy sensation as he looked down from the high pinnacle of fame. The secret of the power of the poem lay in the fact that its novelty and romance could be appreciated at once by a public taste not yet jaded by the dainty and exquisite.

Mr. Dallas says that it was with the greatest difficulty that he could induce Byron to allow his name to be published with the poem, because he feared the enemies he had made by his satire, and that the world would fix upon him the character of Childe Harold.

Alluding to the singular fact that the most conservative country in Europe should have produced such a revolutionary poet, Mr. John Morley says: "Just because it was wonderful that England should have produced Byron, it would have been wonderful if she had received any permanently deep impression from him, or perceived a lasting appreciation of his work, or cheerfully and intelligently recognised his immense force. And accordingly we cannot

help perceiving that generations are arising who know not Byron." Charles Kingsley says: "What has put Byron out of favor with the public of late has been, not his faults, but his excellencies. His artistic good taste, his classical polish, his sound, shrewd sense, his hatred of cant, his insight into humbug, his shallow, pitiable habit of being always intelligible — these are the sins that condemn him."

CANTO THIRD

The return to England and the events of the years from 1812 to 1816 constitute the second period in Byron's work. He lived most of the time in London, but the visits to Newstead were frequent, negotiating with lawyers and creditors. He makes three speeches in the House of Lords, superintends the publication of Cantos I. and II. of *Childe Harold*, which appeared in February, 1812. The result of this startling work brought him into close contact with authors, on the one hand, and men of the world on the other. The former had little influence upon him in comparison to the latter, who led him into the world of fashion. For this world he poured forth in dazzling rapidity those romances which palpitate with the intoxication of revolt against the conventional and the comfortable. While there are to be found in these pieces vigor of movement, richness of melody, and mastery of language, yet the abundant affectation and cynicism, the sonorous rhetoric, the lack of organic structure, must serve to keep them in the sphere of interesting and creditable verse rather than that of great poetry. But the association with the men of art and letters of the time reveals two characteristics of Byron's nature — love for such a great-hearted gentleman as Scott, whom he called the "monarch of Parnassus," and reverence for the strength and purity of Wordsworth, whom he had earlier abused. These elements indicate the rise of a new Byron, who will embody in matchless art the pathos and the passion of a noble soul whose temper has been chastened by pain, and whose heart has been softened by sorrow. For this reason we need not deplore that uncongenial union with Miss Milbanke, for, as Charles Kingsley

says in this connection, "Providence uses strange tools in his cosmogony; but he does not use them in vain." It is to this tragic event, and its natural sequence in the life of two souls, that the world owes Byron's purest art. It took place on the 2d of January, 1815, and the conditions attending the act are pathetically revealed in *The Dream*: —

> "It was a strange order that the doom
> Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
> Almost like a reality — the one
> To end in madness; both in misery."

A daughter, Augusta Ada, was born to them on December 10; five weeks later Mrs. Byron took the child, and, on the pretence of paying a visit to her family, left Newstead never to return. Of the cause for this act the world has many theories but few facts, and they may be found in the various volumes devoted to Byron's biography. We are more interested here with the effects of this act. Henceforth there is no occasion for pretended sorrows and fictitious pain; they both became permanent inmates of the breast. It is this natural sorrow, grief, and pain, which drives him into exile, and ennobles the Childe of the remaining cantos, where the personal emotion of the poet, chastened and deepened by his experiences, yields richer harmonies, and where consolation comes, not in rioting and in theatrical posing, but in sympathy with man, in society of great actions, and in communion with God in the solitudes of lake, sea, and mountain.

Byron had tasted the pleasures of a life in society for four short years, and now he felt their decay. The cup that was handed to him on the advent of *Childe Harold* had been drained to the dregs, and as he stands upon the deck of the vessel with its prow turned toward the deep on April 25, 1816, he sees the sweet face of that daughter of whose companionship cruel fate had deprived him. There is no picture in literature more pathetic than this with which the third canto opens.

This canto was first published in 1816, without a preface, but with this motto: "Afinque cette application vous forçât de penser

à autre chose ; il níg a en vérité de remèdie que celui la et le temps." — *Lettre du roi de Prusse à d'Alembert* (September 7, 1776).

The contrast between the first two cantos and the third is much like that of Shelley's between *Queen Mab* and *Prometheus Unbound.*

ll. 2–4. **Ada, sole daughter,** etc. This phrase is the fundamental note from this time on through all the variations of movement. For contrast, cf. Cowper, *The Task*, III., 290: —

> "Oh, friendly to the best pursuits of man,
> Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,
> Domestic life in rural leisure passed!"

Cf. *Lara*, I., 5: —

> "Whate'er he be, 'twas not what he had been;
> That brow in furrow'd lines had fix'd at last,
> And spake of passions, but of passions past."

l. 12. **And the waves bound,** etc. The strain of the sea again. Cf. *Corsair:* —

> "She walks the waters like a thing of life
> And seems to dare the elements to strife.
> . . . . . .
> Meantime, the stately breeze serenely blew,
> And fast and falcon-like the vessel flew."

Siege of Corinth: —

> "Blue roll the waters, blue the sky,
> Spreads like an ocean hung on high."

The Island, I.: —

> "The breeze springs up; the lately flapping sail
> Extends its arch before the growing gale."

l. 21. **outlaw,** etc. Byron never lays the blame of his actions upon others. Cf. Shelley: —

> "None was near to mock my streaming eyes
> Which pour'd their warm drops on the sunny ground,
> So without shame I spake: 'I will be wise,
> And just, and free, and mild, if in me lies

Such power, for I grow weary to behold
The selfish and the strong still tyrannise
Without reproach or check.' I then control'd
My tears, my heart grew calm, and I was meek and bold."

ll. 38–55. **He, who has grown aged,** etc. Goethe said, "Byron is quite too much in the dark about himself; the moment he begins to reflect he is a child." While this may be true in general of Byron's work, up to this time the revelation of these stanzas is quite the contrary to Goethe's statement. He has risen into the sphere of true being, the *What Is* of Browning. Deeds, if not years, have brought the philosophic mind. Cf. Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*, IV.: —

"To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
To love and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates."

ll. 56–61. **I have thought,** etc. Taine asks, "Who would not be touched by avowals so passionate and complete?" Contrast this with that of Wordsworth, *Prelude*, XI., 79: —

"I had approached, like other youths, the shield
Of human nature from the golden side,
And would have fought, even to the death, to attest
The quality of the metal which I saw."

l. 64. **without accusing Fate.** Charles Kingsley says: "Byron has the most intense and awful sense of moral law, — of law external to himself. Byron's cry is: There is a law, and therefore I am miserable. Why cannot I keep the law? Shelley's is: There is a law, and therefore I am miserable. Why should not the law be abolished?"

l. 69. **wounds which kill not,** etc. Cf. Wordsworth, "There is a bondage," etc.: —

"Who, henceforth, must wear
Their fetters in their souls."

l. 91. **He found in wonder-works,** etc. The student should study carefully Byron's relation to nature in the last two cantos

for illustrations of what Arnold says: "When he is inspired, Nature herself seems to take the pen from him as she took it from Wordsworth, and to write for him as she wrote for Wordsworth, with her own penetrating simplicity." Cf. *Landscape in Poetry*, F. T. Palgrave, "Scott and Byron."

ll. 108–109. **Proud**, etc. There is something sublime in this loneliness of Byron. His trials have revealed to him depths within himself of which he had not before dreamed. "As for poets," says Scott, "I have seen all the best of my time and country. I never thought any of them would come up to an artist's notion of the character except Byron. His countenance was a thing to dream of."

ll. 110–118. **Where rose the mountains**, etc. There is nothing in Wordsworth more intense with love of nature than this, and Wordsworth is the only poet who has given us anything to match it. Cf. *Prelude*, II.: —

> "Yet were I grossly destitute of all
> Those human sentiments that make this earth
> So dear, if I should fail with grateful voice
> To speak of you, ye mountains, and ye lakes
> And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds
> That dwell among the hills where I was born.
> If in my youth I have been pure in heart,
> If, mingling with the world, I am content
> With my own modest pleasures, and have lived
> With God and Nature communing, removed
> From little enmities and low desires,
> The gift is yours: . . .
> Ye winds and sounding cataracts! 'tis yours,
> Ye mountains! thine, O Nature! Thou hast fed
> My lofty speculations; and in thee,
> For this uneasy heart of ours, I find
> A never-failing principle of joy
> And purest passion."

l. 127. **yon heaven which woos us**, etc. Cf. *Lachin-y-Gair*: —

> "Oh, for the crags that are wild and majestic,
> The steep frowning glories of dark Loch-na-Garr."

Cf. *The Prayer of Nature*: —

> "Shall man confine his Maker's sway
> To Gothic domes of mouldering stone?
> Thy temple is the face of day:
> Earth, ocean, heaven, thy boundless throne."

ll. 137–145. **Self-exiled Harold.** Scott says: "The commentary, through which the meaning of this melancholy tale is rendered obvious, is still in vivid remembrance; for the errors of those who excel their fellows in gifts and accomplishments are not soon forgotten. Those scenes, ever most painful to the bosom, were rendered more so by public discussion; and it is at least possible that amongst those who exclaimed most loudly on this unhappy occasion were some in whose eyes literary superiority exaggerated Lord Byron's offence."

l. 146. **Stop!—for thy tread**, etc. Somewhat in contrast to Goldsmith with knapsack, walking-stick, and flute, Byron travelled for a time in a coach modelled after one of Napoleon's. At Brussels the coach was abandoned for a caleche. It was during his stay at Brussels that he visited the field of Waterloo, where Wellington defeated Napoleon only a year before.

l. 148. **Is the spot marked**, etc. In 1823 the colossal "Lion of Waterloo" was erected here.

l. 159. **In 'pride of place.'** Byron says: "*Pride of place* is a term of falconry, and means the highest pitch of flight." Ms. has —

> "Here his last flight the haughty eagle flew,
> Then tore with bloody beak the fatal plain."

l. 164. **Fit retribution**, etc. Napoleon at St. Helena. Cf. *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte*: —

> "Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
> Nor written thus in vain —
> Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
> Or deepen every stain:
> If thou hadst died as honour dies,
> Some new Napoleon might rise."

"Never since Æschylus was seen so tragic a pomp; and men followed, with a sort of pang, the train of gigantic figures, whom he brought in mournful ranks before their eyes from the far past." — TAINE.

l. 169. **The patched-up idol.** The Holy Alliance.

l. 175. **Europe's flowers,** etc. Cf. Hon. George S. Boutwell's address on *What to do with the Philippines.* In replying to those who say there are few great men in America (1898), he says: "The country gave its young men, the hope of the future, to the contest of 1861; and our impoverishment, whatever it may have been, is due to the sacrifices thus made. The memorials in all the universities and colleges, in all the cities and towns of the country, may indicate, but they cannot measure, the extent or the magnitude of the losses that the nation has thus been called to endure."

l. 180. **when the myrtle wreathes the sword.** Cf. *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte:* —

> "Where may the wearied eye repose,
> When gazing on the Great;
> Where neither guilty glory glows,
> Nor despicable state?
> Yes — one — the first — the last — the best —
> The Cincinnatus of the West,
> Whom envy dared not hate,
> Bequeath the name of Washington
> To make man blush there was but one."

l. 182. **There was a sound of revelry,** etc. Professor Nichol says: "No familiarity can detract from Waterloo, which holds its own by Barbour's *Bannockburn* and Scott's *Flodden.* Sir Walter generously doubts whether any verses in English surpass these lines in vigour."

Cf. Miss Martineau's *Introduction to the History of Peace:* "It was on the evening of the 15th [of June, 1815] that Wellington received the news at Brussels of the whereabout of the French. He instantly perceived that the object was to separate his force from the Prussians. He sent off orders to his troops in every

direction to march upon the Quatre-Bras. This done, he dressed and went to a ball, where no one would have discovered from his manner that he had heard any remarkable news. It was whispered about the rooms, however, that the French were not far off; and some officers dropped off in the course of the evening, — called by their duty, and leaving heavy hearts behind them. Many parted so who never met again. It was about midnight when the general officers were summoned. Somewhat later, the younger officers were very quietly called away from their partners, and by sunrise of the summer morning of the 16th all were on their march."

l. 201. **Brunswick's fated chieftain.** The Duke of Brunswick, killed at Quatre-Bras, June 16, 1815, two days before Waterloo.

l. 227. '**Cameron's gathering.**' The slogan or rallying-cry of the Cameron Highlanders.

l. 228. **Lochiel.** The chief of the Camerons.

Albyn. Gaelic for Scotland.

l. 235. **Evan . . . Donald.** Sir Evan Cameron and his descendant Donald.

l. 236. **Ardennes.** The forest between Brussels and Waterloo. Mrs. Oliphant says, "The description of Waterloo has embodied for us the wonderful excitement of that historical scene as few historians could do."

l. 254. **loftier harps than mine.** Especially Scott, whom Byron loved. Cf. Scott, *Field of Waterloo*. The student should read here, too, Tennyson's great *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington* and Wordsworth's *Character of the Happy Warrior*.

ll. 255–262. **Yet one,** etc. Major Howard, the son of Byron's guardian, the Earl of Carlisle. Byron had satirized the Earl in the *English Bards*, because he had not been willing to present him to the House of Lords. Being advised by his sister Augusta to make amends for the insult, Byron wrote this splendid tribute to the son.

l. 263. **There have been tears,** etc. The singular beauty and tenderness of this stanza, the sincerity and depth of its human

love in union with nature reminds us again of Wordsworth. Cf. Wordsworth, *When to the attractions of the busy world.*

l. 265. **tree.** Byron says: "My guide from Mont St. Jean over the field seemed intelligent and accurate. The place where Major Howard fell was not far from two tall and solitary trees (there was a third, cut down or shivered in the battle), which stand a few yards from each other at a pathway's side. Beneath these he died, and was buried."

l. 299. **Vitality of poison.** Cf. *The Dream:* —

> "He fed on poisons, but they had no power,
> But were a kind of nutriment."

ll. 302–307. **but Life will suit,** etc. Cf. *In Memoriam:* —

> "Behold, we know not anything;
> I can but trust that good shall fall
> At last — far off — at last, to all,
> And every sorrow change to spring."

Cf. Tennyson, *Nothing will Die*, and *All Things will Die.*

ll. 313–316. **Their children's lips shall echo,** etc. Cf. Tennyson, *Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington:* —

> "His triumph will be sung
> By some yet unmoulded tongue
> Far on in summers that we shall not see."

ll. 317–370. **There sunk the greatest,** etc. Byron has been accused of inconsistency in his attitude toward Napoleon, but it is only the inconsistency of history. History cherishes the genius of Napoleon while lamenting its method. Cf. *Don Juan*, Canto IX., stanza ix., where of Pitt he says: —

> "Never had mortal man such opportunity,
> Except Napoleon, or abused it more."

Cf. Emerson, *Representative Men*, "Napoleon, the Man of the World;" Carlyle, *Hero Worship.*

ll. 365–370. **men's thoughts were the steps,** etc. The feeling that Napoleon could not be resisted was the greatest aid to him,

and he should have taken Alexander for his model rather than the cynic Diogenes.

ll. 387, 388. **One breast laid open**, etc. Cf. Wordsworth: —

> "Blest statesman he whose mind's unselfish will
> Leaves him at ease among grand thoughts."

l. 409. **Maternal Nature.** Byron went from Brussels up the Rhine. The sudden transition here from ambition and strife to Nature and her charms is indicative of the change in his own character. Cf. Shelley, *Prometheus*, I., "The Earth": —

> "I am the earth,
> Thy mother," etc.

l. 435. **What deeds of prowess**, etc. Mr. John Morley says, "No poet has had a more sublime sense of the infinite melancholy of history."

ll. 476–496. **For there was soft remembrance**, etc. This tribute to his sister Augusta is what we are prepared for by the previous allusions to her. Cf. Canto I., 84, note. Cf. *To Augusta*: —

> "When all around grew drear and dark,
> And reason half withheld her ray,
> And hope but shed a dying spark,
> Which more misled my lonely way,
> . . . . . .
> "When fortune changed, and love fled far,
> And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
> Thou wert the solitary star
> Which rose, and set not to the last."

ll. 479–482. **learned to love . . . the helpless looks of blooming infancy**, etc. Cf. Cantos II., 547; III., 1076; IV., 1336.

ll. 497–536. **The castled crag**, etc. This beautiful lyric was written to his sister from the banks of the Rhine in May, 1816. From here the character Childe Harold disappears, until in the last of Canto IV. he reappears to say his farewell. The castle crowns the summit of one of the Seven Mountains (Siebengebirge), opposite Bonn.

ll. 540–554. **Beneath its base**, etc. General Hoche and General Marceau were buried in the same grave. The latter was wounded in the battle at Altenkirchen, near Coblenz, in 1796, and died soon after at the age of twenty-seven.

l. 555. **Ehrenbreitstein.** A fortress on the heights opposite Coblenz. It was betrayed to the French, 1799, and was dismantled and blown up by them in 1801.

ll. 574–577. **There can be no farewell**, etc. Cf. Wordsworth, *Tintern Abbey*: —

> "Not only with the sense
> Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
> That in this moment there is life and food
> For future years."

l. 594. **And throned Eternity in icy halls.** Cf. Coleridge, *Hymn to Mont Blanc*: —

> "Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
> Thou dread Ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
> Great hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
> And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun
> Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God."

l. 596. **The Avalanche.** Cf. *Manfred*, I., 1.

> "Around his waist are forests braced,
> The Avalanche in his hand."

Cf. Shelley, *Prometheus*, II. : —

> "Hark! the rushing snow,
> The sun-awakened Avalanche, whose mass,
> Thrice sifted by the storm, had gathered there
> Flake after flake," etc.

l. 602. **Morat.** Here, not far from the lake of Neuchâtel, the Duke of Burgundy was defeated by the Swiss in 1476. Fifteen thousand dead were left on the field.

l. 609. **Cannæ's carnage.** Forty-five thousand Romans fell in this battle.

l. 617. **Draconic.** Alluding to the severity of the laws.

l. 618. **lonelier column.** Standing on the ruins of Aventicum (Avenches), the ancient capital of Helvetia.

l. 628. **Julia.** Byron says: "Julia Alpinula, a young Aventian priestess, died soon after a vain endeavor to save her father, condemned to death as a traitor by Aulus Cæcina. Her epitaph was discovered many years ago; it is thus: '*Julia Alpinula hic jaceo, infelicis patris infelix proles, Deæ Aventiæ sacerdos. Exorare patris necem non potui: male mori in fatis illi erat. Vixi annos xxiii.*' I know of no human composition so affecting as this, nor a history of deeper interest. These are the names and actions which ought not to perish, and to which we turn, with a true and healthy tenderness, from the wretched and glittering detail of a confused mass of conquests and battles, with which the mind is roused for a time to a false and feverish sympathy, from whence it recurs at length with all the nausea consequent on such intoxication." It is now known that both monument and inscription were invented by a certain Paulus Guilielmus of the sixteenth century. The fraud was not discovered until after Byron wrote these lines.

ll. 672–680. **Is it not better,** etc. Cf. *To Augusta:* —

> "I ask
> Of Nature that with which she will comply—
> It is but in her summer's sun to bask,
> To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
> To see her gentle face without a mask,
> And never gaze on it with apathy.
> She was my early friend and now shall be
> My Sister."

Cf. Wordsworth, *Prelude*, XII., 201: —

> "I had known
> Too forcibly, too early in my life,
> Visitings of imaginative power
> For this to last: I shook the habit off,
> Entirely and forever, and again
> In Nature's presence stood, as now I stand,
> A sensitive being, a *creative* soul."

l. 683. **High mountains are a feeling.** Cf. Wordsworth, *Tintern Abbey*: —

> "The sounding cataract
> Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
> The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
> Their colors and their forms, were then to me
> An appetite, a feeling, and a love," etc.

ll. 699–706. **And when, at length,** etc. Cf. Shelley, *Hymn to Intellectual Beauty*: —

> "Thy light alone — like mist o'er mountains driven,
> Or music by the night wind sent,
> Thro' strings of some still instrument,
> Or moonlight on a midnight stream,
> Gives grace and truth to life's unquiet dream."

ll. 708–716. **Are not the mountains,** etc. Cf. Tennyson, *The Higher Pantheism*: —

> "Dark is the world to thee: thyself art the reason why,
> For is He not all but that which has power to feel, 'I am I'?"

Arnold says of Wordsworth in contrast to Byron: —

> "The cloud of mortal destiny,
> Others will front it fearlessly —
> But who like him, will put it by?"

l. 720. **To look on One.** Rousseau's early life was spent at Geneva. He was the first to experience that tragedy of revolution in his own breast which was necessary to the new birth of European civilization, and it was but natural that Byron should pay tribute to him here. Cf. E. Caird, *Literature and Philosophy*, for a well-balanced estimate of Rousseau's influence; also J. Morley, *Rousseau*; Carlyle, *Hero Worship*.

Here at Geneva Byron and Shelley met for the first time, and the results of this meeting are as interesting to the student of literary history as that other at Racedown in 1797, which revealed the natural kinship of Coleridge, William and Dorothy Wordsworth, making three people one soul. In each case the ivy had found its oak upon which to twine. Shelley clung to Byron as

Coleridge did to Wordsworth, and like him added grace and beauty to strength. During this association of four months Byron wrote most of that poetry which is distinguished for grace and beauty, for loftiness of inspiration and maturity of reflection. Together they traversed all Rousseau's ground around the lake, with the *Héloïse* before them. They visited the garden and summer house where Gibbon composed his immortal work, and plucked a leaf from the *Acacia* which he planted. They boated upon the lake, and sauntered by moonlight in the woods. They spent their time in delightful amusements. They railed much against a world which did not allow them to do as they would. "Around Leman they talked endless sentiment," says Mrs. Oliphant, "and shed tears of voluptuous emotion. Strange contrast and pendant to the poetic life of Grasmere and Keswick, with all their pieties and solemnities, the grave simplicity, the laborious calms, the mountain stillness and voices of the cataract from the steeps."

l. 726. **self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau.** Byron says, "My mother, before I was twenty, would have it that I was like Rousseau." — Moore, *Life of Byron*, p. 124.

Cf. Shelley, *Julian and Maddalo*, for a fine sketch of the Byron of this time.

l. 744. **Julie.** In Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloïse*, a story of two lovers, St. Preux and Julie.

ll. 746–748. **the memorable kiss.** Rousseau says in his *Confessions* that when he was the guest of Madame d'Epinay, near Paris, he loved her sister-in-law, Madame d'Houdetot, and that he used to meet her every morning to receive the kiss of salutation.

l. 755. **Suspicion's sanctuary.** Rousseau late in life became misanthropic.

l. 764. **Those oracles.** Ruskin, in speaking of his own early love of nature, says: "Before that time no child could have been born to care for mountains, or for the men that lived among them. Till Rousseau's time there had been no 'sentimental' love of nature; and till Scott's no such apprehensive love of 'all sorts and condi-

tions of men,' not in the soul merely, but in the flesh." — *Præterita*, chapter vi.

ll. 798–851. **Clear, placid Leman.** Here we have a poem worthy of Wordsworth's test. It is said that Shelley at this time made Byron read Wordsworth. Cf. *Sonnet on Chillon*, *To Lake Leman.*

> "Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls,
> A thousand feet in depth below
> Its massy waters meet and flow:
> Thus much the fathom-line was sent
> From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
> Which round about the wave enthralls."
> —*The Prisoner of Chillon*, VI.

l. 807. **It is the hush of night.** Cf. *The Corsair:* —

> "'Tis midnight: on the mountains brown
> The cold round moon shines deeply down;
> Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
> Spreads like an ocean hung on high."

ll. 834–842. **All heaven and earth are still.** Cf. Keats: —

> "I stood tiptoe on a little hill
> The air was cooling and so very still," etc.

Cf. Wordsworth, *Composed upon Westminster Bridge:* —

> "Ne'er saw I, never felt a calm so deep!
> The river glideth at his own sweet will:
> Dear God! the very leaves seem asleep,
> And all that mighty heart is lying still."

Cf. Shelley, *Prometheus*, II., "Asia": —

> "Fit throne for such a Power! magnificent!
> How glorious art thou, Earth!"

The student should study the *Prometheus* for its revolutionary spirit and its splendid descriptions of Nature.

l. 852. **Persian.** Cf. Wordsworth, *Excursion*, IV.: —

> "The Persian — zealous to reject
> Altar and image, and the inclusive walls
> And roofs of temples built by human hands —
> To loftiest heights ascending, from their tops,

With myrtle-wreathed tiara on his brow,
Presented sacrifice to moon and stars,
And to the winds and mother elements,
And the whole circle of the heavens, for him
A sensitive existence, and a god,
With lifted hands invoked and songs of praise."

ll. 865–869. **From peak to peak**, etc. Cf. Wordsworth, *To Joanna*: —

"The Rock, like something starting from a sleep,
Took up the lady's voice, and laughed again;
The ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag
Was ready with her cavern: Hammar-scar
And the tall steep of Silver How sent forth
A noise of laughter; Southern Loughrigg heard,
And Fairfield answered with a mountain tone;
Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
Carried the lady's voice, — old Skiddaw blew
His speaking-trumpet; — back out of the clouds
Of Glaramara southward came the voice;
And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty head."

Excursion, II.: —

"Many are the notes
Which in his tuneful course the wind draws forth
From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing shores,
And well those lofty brethren bear their part
In the wild concert."

l. 870. **Most glorious night.** Cf. Shelley, *To Night*, for contrast to this: —

"Wrap thy form in a mantle grey,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day;
Kiss her until she be wearied out,
Then wander o'er city and sea and land."

ll. 897–900. **Sky, mountains, river**, etc. Cf. Wordsworth, *Address to Kilchurn Castle*: —

"Oh! there is life that breathes not; Powers there are
That touch each other to the quick in modes
Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
No soul to dream of."

ll. 909–912. **Soul, heart, mind, passions,** etc. "Byron's soul was exalted by the broad and mighty aspects of nature; for mosaic work he was unfitted; a mountain, the sea, a thunder storm — such imposing objects aroused his noble rage." — E. C. STEDMAN, *Victorian Poets*, p. 197.

l. 916. **With breath all incense.** Cf. *Manfred*, III., 2; *The Address to the Sun:* —

> "Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
> Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts
> Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd
> Themselves in orisons."

Byron admired Ossian. In a two-volume edition of Ossian's works, in the Sumner Collection in the library of Harvard University, will be found interesting marginalia by Byron. There is also a manuscript of Byron's hitherto unpublished poem, *A Version of Ossian's Address to the Sun.* Ossian is in striking contrast to Pope, of whom Byron says: "I shall presume to say that Pope is as great a poet as Shakespeare or Milton; he is a Greek temple. You may call Shakespeare and Milton pyramids if you please, but I prefer the temple."

ll. 924–932. **Clarens,** etc. A village at the head of Lake Geneva, described by Rousseau in the *Nouvelle Héloïse.* This was sacred ground to the two young adventurers. Ruskin says: "Neither the force and precision, nor the rhythm, of Byron's language, were at all the central reasons for my taking him for master. . . . But here I had found a man who spoke only of what he had seen and known. The thing wholly new and precious to me in Byron was his measured and living truth — measured as compared with Homer; and living as compared with everybody else."

l. 961. **make his heart a spirit.** Mr. Noel says, "The prophet-poets, Rousseau and Byron, pointed men to the World Soul, commanding them once more to veil their faces before the swift, subtle splendour of Life: this they named Nature; we name it God."

l. 978. **Lausanne! and Ferney.** The former was the residence of Gibbon when he wrote *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire;* the latter, the residence of Voltaire.

l. 983. **on daring doubts.** Both these men attacked revealed religion.

l. 987. **The one.** Voltaire.

l. 996. **The other.** Gibbon.

l. 1000. **with solemn sneer.** Cf. *The Decline and Fall*, chapters xv. and xvi. Professor Nichol says, "These verses of Byron are the quintessence of criticism on Gibbon and Voltaire."

l. 1023. **Italia.** The Shelleys returned to England in September, 1816, and Byron continued his travels into Italy by the Simplon and Lago Maggiore.

l. 1050. **I have not loved the world,** etc. Mr. John Morley says, "His lot was cast among spent forces, and while it is no hyperbole to say that he himself was the most enormous force of his time, he was only half conscious of this, if indeed he did not always inwardly shrink from crediting his own power and strength."

ll. 1073–1076. **Albeit my brow,** etc. It is true that Ada never again saw her father, and that his voice did bring her some delight when late in life she came to know his poetry. She was brought up in ignorance of him until invited to Newstead by Colonel Wildman. He read some of her father's poems to her, and when she inquired whose they were, he pointed to the portrait of Byron by Phillips. She then shut herself in one of the rooms and read his works. When she was six years of age Byron had her miniature painted. This and a lock of her hair he cherished.

ll. 1090–1094. **Though the grave closed between us,** etc. Ada married the Earl of Lovelace, Lord Ockham. The present Lord Wentworth and Lady Ann Blunt are her surviving children. In March of the year of his death Byron received a letter from his sister answering some inquiries of his in regard to Ada. When

Trelawny arrived at Missolonghi he found this letter, the miniature, and Byron's unfinished reply lying on the table in the room where the body lay. Not long before her death Ada requested to be buried beside her father. Her ashes rest on the poet's left, and those of his mother on his right, in the old gray church at Hucknall-Torkard. I made my pilgrimage to this quaint church in 1886, and the genial old sexton, who buried Ada, took pride in showing the framed bit of embroidery of the Byron arms which rested on the poet's coffin; the plain stone which covers the poet's dust, with the name *Byron* inscribed upon it; and the Register of Burials which bears the following record of the daughter's interment: "1852. Died at 69 Cumberland Place, London. Buried December 3. Aged thirty-six." On the church wall is a marble tablet commemorating the poet. This was the gift of his devoted sister, Augusta. Cf. William Winter, *Gray Days and Gold*, for an interesting description of the church and the tomb.

This canto was completed at Ouchy, near Lausanne, June, 1817, where Byron made his tour through the Bernese Oberland with Hobhouse. During June and July he wrote *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *The Dream*, *Monody on Sheridan*, and *Manfred*.

His account of this excursion reveals his state of mind: "I am a lover of nature . . . but the recollection of bitterness, and more especially of recent and more home desolation, which must accompany me through life, have preyed upon me here; and neither the music of the shepherd, the crashing of the avalanche, the torrent, the mountain, the glacier, the forest, nor the cloud, have for one moment lightened the weight upon my heart, nor enabled me to lose my own wretched identity in the majesty, and the power, and the glory around, above, and beneath me."

Mrs. Oliphant says: "In the third canto, the new beginning of this great poem, Byron attains his climax. He has never been so near our sympathies, never so near the deeper secrets of life. For the first time he comes within the range of influence more penetrating and sacred than the passions and semi-fictitious despair of youth."

CANTO FOURTH

In November, 1816, Byron reached Venice, "the greenest isle of the imagination," where he remained for three years. In the spring of 1817 he visited the chief Italian cities, especially those associated with art and letters: Arqua, where Petrarch was buried; Ferrara, associated with Tasso; Florence, and Rome. Here he gathered the material for the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*, which he began in June and completed in September. It was dedicated to Hobhouse, by whom the Ms. was taken to England, where it was published in 1818.

This edition had the motto: —

> "Visto ho Toscana, Lombardia, Romagna,
> Quel Monte che divide, e quel che serra
> Italia, e uno mare e l'altro, che la bagna." [1]
> — Ariosto, *Satira*, III.

The following was the dedicatory epistle to Hobhouse: —

"To John Hobhouse, Esq., A.M., F.R.S., etc.

"Venice, January 2, 1818.

"My Dear Hobhouse: — After an interval of eight years between the composition of the first and last cantos of *Childe Harold*, the conclusion of the poem is about to be submitted to the public. In parting with so old a friend, it is not extraordinary that I should recur to one still older and better, — to one who has beheld the birth and death of the other, and to whom I am far more indebted for the social advantages of an enlightened friendship than — though not ungrateful — I can, or could be, to *Childe Harold*, for any public favour reflected through the poem or the poet, — to one whom I have known long and accompanied far, whom I have found wakeful over my sickness and kind in my sor-

[1] *Motto.* — I have seen Tuscany, Lombardy, and the Romagna, the mountain range that divides Italy and that which hems her in, and the one and the other sea that bathes her. Ariosto adds, "Questo me basta," and that suffices me.

row, glad in my prosperity and firm in my adversity, true in counsel and trusty in peril, — to a friend often tried and never found wanting, — to yourself.

"In so doing, I recur from fiction to truth; and in dedicating to you in its complete, or at least concluded state, a poetical work which is the longest, the most thoughtful and comprehensive of my compositions, I wish to do honour to myself by the record of many years' intimacy with a man of learning, of talent, of steadiness, and of honour. It is not for minds like ours to give or to receive flattery; yet the praises of sincerity have ever been permitted to the voice of friendship; and it is not for you, nor even for others, but to relieve a heart which has not elsewhere, or lately, been so much accustomed to the encounter of good-will as to withstand the shock firmly, that I thus attempt to commemorate your good qualities, or rather the advantages which I have derived from their exertion. Even the recurrence of the date of this letter, the anniversary of the most unfortunate day of my existence,[1] but which cannot poison my future while I retain the resource of your friendship, and of my own faculties, will henceforth have a more agreeable recollection for both, inasmuch as it will remind us of this my attempt to thank you for an indefatigable regard, such as few men have experienced, and no one could experience without thinking better of his species and of himself.

"It has been our fortune to traverse together, at various periods, the countries of chivalry, history, and fable, — Spain, Greece, Asia Minor, and Italy; and what Athens and Constantinople were to us a few years ago, Venice and Rome have been more recently. The poem also, or the pilgrim, or both, have accompanied me from first to last; and perhaps it may be a pardonable vanity which induces me to reflect with complacency on a composition which in some degree connects me with the spot where it was produced, and the objects it would fain describe; and however unworthy it may be deemed of those magical and memorable abodes, however short it may fall of our distant conceptions and immediate impressions, yet as a mark of respect for what is venerable, and of feeling for what

[1] His marriage.

is glorious, it has been to me a source of pleasure in the production, and I part with it with a kind of regret, which I hardly suspected that events could have left me for imaginary objects.

"With regard to the conduct of the last canto, there will be found less of the pilgrim than in any of the preceding, and that little slightly, if at all, separated from the author speaking in his own person. The fact is, that I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive: like the Chinese in Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World,* whom nobody would believe to be a Chinese, it was in vain that I asserted, and imagined that I had drawn, a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition that I determined to abandon it altogether — and have done so. The opinions which have been, or may be, formed on that subject are *now* a matter of indifference; the work is to depend on itself, and not on the writer; and the author, who has no resources in his own mind beyond the reputation, transient or permanent, which is to arise from his literary efforts, deserves the fate of authors.

"In the course of the following canto it was my intention, either in the text or in the notes, to have touched upon the present state of Italian literature, and perhaps of manners. But the text, within the limits I proposed, I soon found hardly sufficient for the labyrinth of external objects, and the consequent reflection; and for the whole of the notes, excepting a few of the shortest, I am indebted to yourself, and these were necessarily limited to the elucidation of the text.

"It is also a delicate, and no very grateful task, to dissert upon the literature and manners of a nation so dissimilar; and requires an attention and impartiality which would induce us — though perhaps no inattentive observers, nor ignorant of the language or customs of the people amongst whom we have recently abode — to distrust, or at least defer our judgment, and more narrowly examine our information. The state of literary, as well as political party, appears to run, or to *have* run, so high that for a stranger to steer impartially between them is next to impossible. It may be

enough, then, at least for my purpose, to quote from their own beautiful language: 'Mi pare che in un paese tutto poetico, che vanta la lingua la più nobile ed insieme la più dolce, tutte le vie diverse si possono tentare, e che sinche la patria di Alfieri e di Monti non ha perduto l' antico valore, in tutte essa dovrebbe essere la prima.'[1] Italy has great names still, — Canova, Monti, Ugo Foscolo, Pindemonte, Visconti, Morelli, Cicognara, Albrizzi, Mezzophanti, Mai, Mustoxidi, Aglietti, and Vacca,[2] will secure to the present generation an honourable place in most of the departments of Art, Science, and Belles Lettres; and in some the very highest: Europe — the World — has but one Canova.

"It has been somewhere said by Alfieri that 'La pianta uomo nasce più robusta in Italia che in qualunque altra terra, e che gli stessi atroci delitti che vi si commettono ne sono una prova.'[3] Without subscribing to the latter part of his proposition, a dangerous doctrine, the truth of which may be disputed on better grounds, namely, that the Italians are in no respect more ferocious than their neighbours, — that man must be wilfully blind, or ignorantly heedless, who is not struck with the extraordinary capacity of this people, or, if such a word be admissible, their *capabilities*,[4] the facility of their acquisitions, the rapidity of their conceptions, the fire of their genius, their sense of beauty, and, amidst all the disadvantages of repeated revolutions, the desolation of battles, and the despair of ages, their still unquenched 'longing after immortality,' — the immortality of independence. And when we ourselves,

[1] It seems to me that, in a country wholly poetic, which boasts a language at once the noblest and the sweetest, all the various ways can be tried, and that since the land of Alfieri and of Monti has not lost her ancient worth, in all she ought to be the leader.

[2] Canova, the sculptor; Monti, Ugo Foscolo, Pindemonte, poets; Visconti, Aglietti, Cicognara, archæologists; Morelli, bibliographer; Mai, Mezzophanti, philologists; Madame d'Albrizzi, critic; and Vacca, physician. Mustoxidi a Greek archæologist who wrote in Italian.

[3] The human plant grows in Italy more strong than in any other land, the atrocious crimes committed there are a proof of it.

[4] Cf. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, IV., iv., 38, "That capability and godlike reason," etc. Cf. Shelley, preface to *Prometheus Unbound* (1819), "The mass of capabilities remains at every period materially the same," etc.

in riding round the walls of Rome, heard the simple lament of the labourers' chorus, 'Roma! Roma! Roma! Roma non è più come era prima,'[1] it was difficult not to contrast this melancholy dirge with the bacchanal roar of the songs of exultation still yelled from the London taverns over the carnage of Mont St. Jean, and the betrayal of Genoa, of Italy, of France, and of the world, by men whose conduct you yourself have exposed in a work[2] worthy of the better days of our history. For me, —

"'Non movero mai corda
Ove la turba di sue ciance assorda.'[3]

"What Italy has gained by the late transfer of nations it were useless for Englishmen to inquire, till it becomes ascertained that England has acquired something more than a permanent army and a suspended Habeas Corpus; it is enough for them to look at home. For what they have done abroad, and especially in the South, 'Verily they *will have* their reward,' and at no very distant period.

"Wishing you, my dear Hobhouse, a safe and agreeable return to that country whose real welfare can be dearer to none than to yourself, I dedicate to you this poem in its completed state; and repeat once more how truly I am ever

"Your obliged and affectionate friend,

"Byron."

l. 1. **I stood in Venice**, etc. When Byron first went to Venice, he wrote to Moore (December 5, 1816): "Of Venice I shall say little. . . . It is a poetical place and classical, to us, from Shakespeare and Otway. I have not yet sinned against it in verse, nor do I know that I shall do so, having been tuneless since I crossed the Alps, and feeling as yet no renewal of the 'estro.'" However, soon came (1816–1821) this portion of *Childe Harold*, the *Ode on Venice*, *Beppo*, *Marino Faliero*, and *The Two Foscari*.

Bridge of Sighs. Connecting the ducal palace with the state prisons. Cf. *The Two Foscari*, IV., 1: —

[1] Rome! Rome! Rome! Rome is no longer what she was.
[2] *Letters written by an Englishman during the Last Reign of Napoleon*, 1816.
[3] I will never touch the lyre where the crowd deafens me with its fooleries.

"Unless you would pass o'er
The Bridge which few repass."

l. 8. **the winged Lion.** The Lion of St. Mark, the emblem of Venice. It stood on the top of the beautiful column in the *Piazza di San Marco.*

l. 9. **hundred isles.** This is no exaggeration, as there are 117 islands on which the city is built.

ll. 10–15. **a sea Cybele.** The sea crowned with her beautiful towers. Mr. John Morley says, "The matter with which Byron deals is gigantic, and he paints with violent colours and sweeping pencil."

l. 19. **Tasso's echoes,** etc. "The well-known song of the gondoliers, of alternate stanzas, from Tasso's *Jerusalem*, has died with the independence of Venice. Editions of the poem, with the original on one column and the Venetian variations on the other, as sung by the boatmen, were once common, and are still to be found." — BYRON.

l. 25. **how Venice once was dear.** Cf. Wordsworth, Sonnet, *On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic:* —

"Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West: the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth, —
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
She was a maiden City, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And when she took unto herself a Mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay:
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
Of that which once was great is passed away."

l. 31. **dogeless.** No longer free, the office of Doge was abolished, 1797.

l. 33. **Rialto.** The famous bridge across the grand canal.

Shylock and the Moor. Cf. *Merchant of Venice* and *Othello.*

l. 34. **Pierre.** A character in Otway's *Venice Preserved.*

ll. 37–45. **The beings of the mind,** etc. Cf. Browning, *Abt Vogler:*—

"All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor power,
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist,
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour."

Rabbi Ben Ezra:—

"All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
What entered into thee
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure."

ll. 46, 47. **Such is the refuge,** etc. Cf. Wordsworth:—

"So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die."

Cf. Tennyson, *Merlin and the Gleam*, for a history of the two periods, Youth and Age:—

"Mighty the Wizard
Who found me at sunrise
Sleeping, and woke me
And learn'd me Magic.
. . . .
"For thro' the Magic
Of him the Mighty,
Who taught me in Childhood,
There on the border
Of boundless Ocean,
All but in Heaven
Hovers the Gleam."

ll. 64–90. **I've taught me other tongues**, etc. This was a frequent mood with Byron. When in England he sighed for a retreat in the Cyclades; and when away, he would ask, "Where is real comfort to be found out of England?" Here is a hope worthy of England's greatest poets, "to be remembered with my land's language."

Milton said, "I applied myself to fix all the industry and art I could unite to the adorning of my native tongue." Wordsworth hoped to create something "that pure hearts would reverence." Browning wrote, "Here and here did England help me, — how can I help England?"

Cf. *In Memoriam*, XVIII.: —

> "'Tis well; 'tis something; we may stand
> Where he in English earth is laid,
> And from his ashes may be made
> The violet of his native land."

l. 85. **Spartan's epitaph.** Byron wrote from Venice: "Some of the epitaphs at Ferrara pleased me more than the more splendid monuments at Bologna; for instance: —

> "'Martini Luigi
> Implora pace!'
>
> "'Lucretia Picini
> Implora eterne quiete.'

Can anything be more full of pathos? . . . There is all the helplessness, and humble hope, and deathlike prayer, that can arise from the grave."

ll. 88, 89. **The thorns**, etc. Cf. *Manfred*, III., 4: —

> "The mind which is immortal makes itself
> Requital for its good and evil thoughts;
> Is its own origin of ill and end."

ll. 91–95. **The spouseless Adriatic**, etc. Alluding to the Doge's annual custom of wedding, on Ascension Day, the Adriatic by throwing a ring into the sea from the state galley, the *Bucentaur*, as a sign of the maritime supremacy of Venice. Cf. Wordsworth, Sonnet, in note to l. 25, *supra*.

l. 95. **yet sees.** For a time this Lion was in possession of the French in Paris.

l. 97. **an Emperor.** Here, in 1177, the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa ("the Suabian," l. 100) made submission to Alexander III.

l. 100. **the Austrian reigns.** Napoleon wrested Venice from Austria in 1805, but it was restored to her in 1814, and ceded to Italy in 1866.

l. 107. **Dandolo.** He was elected Doge in 1192, when he was eighty-five. At ninety-seven he led the Venetians on a crusade for the capture of Constantinople.

l. 109. **steeds of brass.** On St. Mark's Church. They were brought from Constantinople by Dandolo. They were originally in Rome, but were taken from there by Constantine.

l. 111. **Doria's menace.** In August, 1379, when the Venetians were reduced to great straits by the Genoese, and offered to submit to any terms provided their independence was left to them, the Genoese commander, Peter Doria, replied, "Ye shall have no peace until we have first put a rein upon those unbridled horses of yours, which are upon the porch of your evangelist St. Mark."

l. 113. **thirteen hundred years of freedom.** The foundation of Venice dates from the invasion of Italy by the Huns under Attila, A.D. 452. Cf. the *Ode on Venice*, 1: —

> "Thirteen hundred years
> Of wealth and glory turned to dust and tears."

l. 114. **Sinks**, etc. The gradual settling of Venetian buildings, which rest on piles. Cf. Shelley, *Lines written among the Euganean Hills*: —

> "Sun-girt City! thou hast been
> Ocean's child, and then his queen;
> Now is come a darker day,
> And thou soon must be his prey.
> . . . . .
> "when the sea-mew
> Flies, as once before it flew,

O'er thine isles depopulate,
And all is in its ancient state,
Save where many a palace-gate,
With green sea-flowers overgrown,
Like a rock of ocean's own,
Topples o'er the abandoned sea,
As the tides change sullenly."

l. 120. **The 'Planter of the Lion.'** "That is, the Lion of St. Mark, the standard of the Republic, which is the origin of the word *Pantaloon*, — Piantaleone, Pantaleon, Pantaloon." — Byron. St. Pantaleone was a patron of Venice, and in time came to be an Italian nickname for a Venetian. Pantaloons were so called "because worn by Venetians." — Skeat.

l. 123. **Europe's bulwark**, etc. Cf. Wordsworth, Sonnet, *supra* : —

"Once did She hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West."

Ottomite. Ottoman.

l. 124. **Candia.** In Crete. The Venetians defended it against the Turks for twenty-four years. The Greeks besieged Troy ten years.

l. 125. **Lepanto's fight.** Cf. note on II., 356.

l. 129. **sumptuous pile.** Ducal palace.

l. 133. **foreign aspects.** The Austrian officers.

l. 138. **in the Attic Muse.** Plutarch, in his *Life of Nicias*, relates that after the Athenians had been defeated, freedom was gained by some of the captives who sang from the works of Euripides.

ll. 147, 148. **Thy choral memory**, etc. Three noble poems are the result of Byron's musing upon these things in Venice, Ravenna, and Ferrara: *The Ode to Venice*, *The Prophecy of Dante*, and *The Lament of Tasso*. In the *Ode* he laments the decay of the 'Commonwealth' : —

"The name of Commonwealth is past and gone
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;

Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns her own
A sceptre, and endures the purple robe,
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
His chainless mountains, 'tis but for a time."

He hails the new home of freedom in America —

"Still one great clime, in full and free defiance
Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,
Above the far Atlantic."

ll. 151–153. **Albion**, etc. Cf. Shelley, *England in 1819*: —

"Rulers, who neither see, nor feel, nor know,
But leech-like to their fainting country cling," etc.

ll. 154–171. **I loved her**, etc. Professor Nichol says: "Byron's *Venice* may be set beside the masterpieces of Ruskin's prose. They are together the joint pride of Italy and England." Ruskin says of Byron's influence on him: "He first animated mountains and sea for me with a sense of real human nobleness and grief. He taught me the meaning of Chillon and Meillerie, and bade me seek first in Venice the ruined homes of Foscari and Falieri. . . . He reanimated for me the real people whose feet had worn the marble I trod on." The student should study the early chapters of Ruskin's *Præterita* for the influence of Byron, and the *Modern Painters* for the influence of Wordsworth.

l. 158. **Otway**, etc. Dramas or tales, the scene of which is laid in Venice. *Venice Preserved*, *Mysteries of Udolpho*, *Der Geistersehen*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Othello*.

ll. 172–216. **But from their nature**, etc. In these stanzas we have the chiefest revelation of life as embalmed in the amber of immortal verse. Cf. Wordsworth, *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*, for results of early impressions: —

"O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction. . . .

. . . truths that wake
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness nor mad endeavor
Nor man nor boy
Can utterly abolish or destroy."

Cf. *On Seeing Peele Castle in a Storm*, for effects of suffering: —

"I have submitted to a new control:
A power is gone, which nothing can restore:
A deep distress has humanized my soul."

Cf. Tennyson, *Merlin and the Gleam*: —

"Sweet the Magic
When over the valley,
In early summers,
Over the mountain,
On human faces,
And all around me,
Moving to melody
Floated the Gleam."

In Memoriam, CVIII.: —

"I will not shut me from my kind,
And, lest I stiffen into stone,
I will not eat my heart alone,
Nor feed with sighs a passing wind."

Cf. Browning, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*: —

"Grow old along with me!
The best of life is yet to be,
The last of life for which the first was made:
Our times are in His hand
Who saith 'A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!'"

l. 172. **tannen.** Fir trees.

l. 219. **A ruin amidst ruins.** Cf. *Manfred*, II., 1. Where Manfred is speaking to the chamois hunter: —

"Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud, and free;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts
The days of health and nights of sleep; thy toils

By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes
Of cheerful old age, and a quiet grave.
This do I see, — and then I look within,
It matters not, — my soul was scorch'd already."

ll. 235–243. **The moon is up**, etc. Byron's association with Shelley did much to raise and cheer his spirit, and these raptures in the presence of Nature are the result. Cf. *Manfred*, IV. : —

"The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains. — Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness
I learned the language of another world."

Cf. Shelley's allusion to Byron in *Lines written among the Euganean Hills* : —

"That a tempest-cleaving swan
Of the songs of Albion,
Driven from his ancestral streams
By the might of evil dreams,
Found a nest in thee; and Ocean
Welcomed him with such emotion
That its joy grew his, and sprung
From his lips like music flung
O'er a mighty thunder-fit,
Chastening terror," etc.

l. 238. **Friuli's mountains.** The Julian Alps. "The point of view is the mainland opposite Venice, where the river Brenda enters the sea." — Tozer.

ll. 244–261. **A single star is at her side**, etc. Cf. *The Ancient Mariner*, IV. : —

"The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide:
Softly she was going up
And a star or two beside — "

There is much in these stanzas that suggest the natural magic of Coleridge.

ll. 262–264. **Arqua**, etc. A village among the Euganean Hills. Here, Petrarch, exiled from Florence, passed the closing years of his life. Wordsworth, alluding to the history of the sonnet, says: —

"The melody
Of the small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound."

Petrarch's tomb is in front of the church at Arqua.

l. 264. **Laura's lover.** Laura, the object of Petrarch's love, was a resident of Avignon. Dante's love for Beatrice, Sydney's for Stella, Spenser for Rosalind, and Shakespeare's for "W. H. the onlie begetter of the Sonnets" should be compared with that of Petrarch for Laura.

ll. 266–268. **He arose to raise a language**, etc. Dante, "the spokesman of ten silent centuries," Petrarch, and Boccaccio created and adorned the Italian language.

l. 267. **his land reclaim.** Alluding to his frequent exhortations to Rienzi and the people to seek liberty.

l. 269. **tree.** Petrarch often played upon the names of the lady and the tree — laurel. The line has of course a symbolic as well as an actual meaning.

l. 276. **mansion and sepulchre.** These and his favorite fountain are still preserved.

ll. 278, 280. **A feeling more accordant**, etc. Cf. Milton, *Epitaph on Shakespeare*: —

"What needs my Shakespeare for his honour'd bones
The labour of an age in piled stones," etc.

ll. 295–297. **'Tis solitude**, etc. Cf. Shelley, *Alastor, or the Spirit of Solitude*: —

"There was a Poet whose untimely tomb
No human hands with pious reverence reared,
But the charmed eddies of autumnal winds
Built o'er his mouldering bones a pyramid
Of mouldering leaves in the vast wilderness."

l. 307. **Ferrara.** This city is near Padua on the way to Florence.

l. 311. **Este.** The house of Este, long the rulers of Ferrara. Byron rented a house near Este in the Euganean Hills. Cf. Shelley, *Lines written among the Euganean Hills.*

ll. 314, 315. **those who wore,** etc. Tasso and Ariosto.

ll. 316–336. **their glory and their shame.** Tasso was enamoured of the sister of Alfonso II., Duke of Ferrara, and was for this imprisoned by him as a madman in the hospital of St. Anna. These stanzas and *The Lament of Tasso* are Dantesque in their burning scorn of the well-fed tyrant. Byron visited the cell where Tasso was confined, and wrote, "It attracts a more fixed attention than the residence or the monument of Ariosto — at least it had this effect for me."

> "They call'd me mad — and why?
> O Leonora! wilt not *thou* reply?
> I was indeed delirious in my heart
> To lift my love so lofty as thou art;
> But still my frenzy was not of the mind,
> I knew my fault and felt my punishment,
> Not less because I suffer it unbent.
> That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,
> Hath been the sin which shuts me from mankind."
> — *Lament of Tasso.*

l. 339. **Cruscan quire.** The Academy della Crusca of Florence, which censured Tasso's *Gerusalemme.*

l. 340. **Boileau.** The French critic who attacked the public taste for its enjoyment of Tasso.

ll. 355–360. **Bards.** Dante and Ariosto; **Scott,** Ariosto; **Ariosto of the North,** Scott.

l. 361. **lightning.** The bust of Ariosto which surmounted the tomb was struck by lightning not long before it was removed to the library of Ferrara.

l. 370. **Italia, O Italia!** etc. Byron says that this stanza and the next are a translation of the famous sonnet of Filicaja: —

> "Italia, Italia, o tu, cui feo la sorte
> Dono infelice di bellezza, ond' hai.

Funesta dote d' infiniti guai,
Che in fronte scritti per gran doglia porte:
Deh! fossi tu men bella, o almen più forte;
Onde assai più ti paventasse, o assai
T' amasse men, chi del tuo bello ai rai
Par che si strugga, e pur ti sfida a morte.
Chè giù dall' Alpi non vedrei torrenti
Scender d' armati, nè di sangue tinta
Bever l' onda del Po gallici armenti,
Nè ti vedrei del non tuo ferro cinta
Pugnar col braccio di straniere genti,
Per servir sempre, o vincitrice, o vinta."

Cf. *The Prophecy of Dante:*—

"Thou Italy! so fair that Paradise
Revived in thee blooms forth to man restored."

Mr. Aubrey de Vere in his *Recollections* says, "When pretty well advanced on the descent, we all suddenly exclaimed, 'Italy!' and saw the Italian sun flashing on Italian vegetation, and knew that in an another hour we should be on the land of the vine and the maize, of the orange grove and the lemon grove."

l. 389. **Roman friend,** etc. Servius Sulpicius, who wrote to Cicero to condole with him on the death of his daughter Tullia, compares human bereavements to the loss of national life.

l. 406. **That page.** Cicero, *Epist. ad Fam.*

l. 418. **our guardian.** A fine tribute to the influence of the early church. Cf. De Vere, *Legends of Saxon Saints*, "King Ethelbert of Kent and St. Augustine."

l. 425. **Etrurian Athens.** Florence on the Arno is the home of arts, as Athens was once. Cf. Mrs. Oliphant, *Makers of Florence;* Browning, *Old Pictures in Florence:*—

"And mark through the winter afternoons,
By a gift God grants me now and then,
In the mild decline of those suns like moons,
Who walked in Florence besides her men.

. . . . . .

"One, wishful each scrap should clutch the brick,
Each tinge not wholly escape the plaster,
A lion who dies of an ass's kick,
The wronged great soul of an ancient Master."

ll. 428, 429. **Her corn, and wine,** etc. Cf. *The Prophecy of Dante:*—

"Thou Italy! whose ever golden fields,
Plough'd by the sunbeams solely, would suffice
For the world's granary."

l. 448. **paltry jargon.** Of those who sell statuary.

l. 450. **prize.** Alluding to the award by Paris of the golden apple to Venus.

l. 452. **more deeply blest Anchises.** Æneas was the son of Venus and Anchises.

l. 454. **Lord of War.** Mars, the Roman god of war, who took the place of Ares, the lover of Venus.

l. 463. **and man's fate has moments,** etc. Cf. Arnold, Sonnet, *Written on Emerson's Essays:*—

"Strong is the soul and wise and beautiful;
The seeds of godlike power are in us still;
Gods are we, bards, saints, heroes, if we will!
Dumb judges, censurers, truth or mockery?"

l. 470. **ape.** Imitator.

l. 472. **The graceful bend,** etc. Cf. Browning, *Old Pictures in Florence:*—

"You would fain be kinglier, say, than I am?
Even so, you will not sit like Theseus."

l. 478. **Santa Croce.** Byron called this church "the Westminster Abbey of Italy."

ll. 484–486. **Angelo's.** Michael Angelo's. Byron says: "Alfieri is the great name of this age. His memory is the more dear to them because he is the bard of freedom; and because, as such, his tragedies can receive no countenance from any of their sovereigns."

l. 485. **with his woes.** Referring to the persecution he suffered from the Inquisition on account of his scientific views.

l. 486. **Machiavelli.** The eminent historical and political writer.

l. 495. **Canova.** This famous sculptor was living when Byron wrote this.

l. 498. **bard of Prose.** Boccaccio, author of the *Decameron.*

l. 505. **Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar.** In Ravenna. Cf. *The Prophecy of Dante:* —

> "She denied me what was mine — my roof,
> And shall not have what is not hers — my tomb."

l. 506. **Like Scipio.** He was buried near the sea at Liternum, where he went into voluntary exile.

l. 511. **Petrarch's laureate brow.** Petrarch was crowned in the Capitol at Rome.

l. 512. **Upon a far and foreign soil.** Petrarch's father was banished from Florence not long after his son's birth.

l. 513. **though rifled.** The tomb of Petrarch was desecrated in 1630.

l. 514. **Boccaccio to his parent earth,** etc. "Boccaccio was buried in the church of St. Michael and St. James at Certaldo, a small town in the Valdelsa. . . . But the 'hyæna bigots' of Certaldo tore up the tombstone of Boccaccio, and ejected it from the holy precincts." — Byron.

l. 525. **Cæsar's pageant,** etc. At the funeral of Junia, the wife of Cassius and sister of Brutus, the busts of these men who took part in the assassination of Cæsar were not allowed to be carried in the procession.

l. 532. **pyramid.** The splendid tombs of the Medici. Byron calls them "fine frippery of great slabs."

l. 542. **Arno's dome.** The Florentine gallery. It is worth noting here that Byron at this time sat for his bust to Thorwaldsen.

The marble statue by Thorwaldsen is now in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. It was intended for Westminster Abbey.

l. 543. **sister.** Painting.

l. 551. **defiles.** The Romans were cut off by Hannibal in the pass between the mountains and the lake.

l. 563. **An earthquake,** etc. This is the report of Livy.

l. 586. **Clitumnus.** One of the tributaries of the Tiber. It is famous in pastoral poetry. Cf. Virgil, *Georgic*, II.

l. 590. **milk-white steer.** Cf. Macaulay, *Lays of Ancient Rome*: —

> "Unwatched along Clitumnus
> Grazes the milk-white steer."

l. 614. **Velino.** The waterfall of Terni is formed by this tributary of the Tiber.

l. 620. **Phlegethon.** A river of the lower regions.

l. 653. **lauwine.** Avalanche.

l. 654. **Jungfrau.** The mountain inaccessible, of the Bernese Alps. Cf. *Manfred.*

l. 657. **Chimari.** Cf. *Note*, Canto II., 453.

l. 658. **Acroceraunian.** Hills of thunder.

l. 666. **lyric Roman's aid.** Horace. Cf. *Ode I.*

ll. 672-693. **I abhorred,** etc. The university teaching at Cambridge was ridiculed by Wordsworth. Cf. *Prelude*, III.: —

> "Mine eyes were crossed by butterflies, ears vexed
> By chattering popinjays; the inner heart
> Seemed trivial, and the impresses without
> Of a too gaudy region."

l. 690. **prescribe his art.** Cf. Horace, *Ars Poetica.*

l. 707. **Scipio's tomb.** Discovered near the Appian Way in 1780. The bones were carried off.

l. 715. **steep.** The ascent of the Capitoline Hill.

ll. 740–742. **Sylla**, etc. He began the war against Mithridates without waiting to gain the results of his victory over Marius.

l. 758. **Cromwell.** Cf. Milton, Sonnet, *To the Lord General Cromwell.*

l. 764. **day of double victory and death.** "On the 3d of September Cromwell gained the victory of Dunbar; a year afterward he obtained 'his crowning mercy' of Worcester; and a few years after, on the same day, which he had ever esteemed the most fortunate for him, died." — Byron.

l 775. **statue.** Of Pompey in the Spada palace. It is supposed to be the one at the base of which Cæsar fell.

l. 781. **Nemesis.** Retribution.

l. 784. **thunder-stricken nurse.** The famous bronze wolf of the Capitoline Museum is thought to be the one which Cicero alluded to as having been struck by lightning. Cf. *Oratio in Catilinam*, III., 8.

l. 786. **dome.** The Museum of the Capitol.

l. 800. **vain man.** Napoleon.

l. 809. **Alcides.** Hercules, who became a slave of Omphale, was dressed like a maiden and spun wool.

l. 846. **Their fellows fall,** etc. Mr. John Morley says of the above stanzas, "We hardly feel how great a poet Byron was until we have read him at Venice, at Florence, and, above all, in that overpowering scene where the 'lone mother of dead empires' broods like a mysterious haunting spirit among the columns and arches and wicked fabrics of Rome."

l. 859. **Pallas.** Who sprang full armed from the head of Jove.

l. 863. **Washington.** Cf. *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte:* —

> "Where may the wearied eye repose
> When gazing on the Great;
> Where neither guilty glory glows
> Nor despicable state?

"Yes — one — the first — the last — the best,
The Cincinnatus of the West,
Whom envy dared not hate,
Bequeath the name of Washington,
To make man blush there was but one."

Cf. *Don Juan*, IX., 8 : —

"George Washington had thanks and nought beside,
Except the all cloudless glory (which few men's is)
To free his country."

ll. 865–873. **But France got drunk**, etc. Cf. Coleridge *Ode to France* : —

"The sensual and the dark rebel in vain,
Slaves by their own compulsion. In mad game
They burst their manacles and wear the name
Of Freedom graven on a heavier chain."

l. 880. **the sap lasts.** Cf. *The Giaour* : —

"For Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeath'd by bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft, is ever won."

l. 881. **the North.** England.

l. 883. **tower.** The tomb of Cæcilia Metella on the Appian Way.

l. 884. **fortress.** It was once used as a fortress.

l. 904. **Cornelia.** Mother of the Gracchi.

l. 905. **Egypt's graceful queen.** Cleopatra.

l. 917. **Hesperus.** The hectic light upon the cheek is the harbinger of death, as Hesperus is of evening.

l. 918. **autumnal leaf-like red.** Cf. *Manfred*, II., 4 : —

"There's bloom upon her cheek;
But now I see it is no living hue,
But a strange hectic — like the unnatural red
Which Autumn plants upon the perished leaf."

ll. 928–931. **standing thus by thee**, etc. Cf. Coleridge, *Religious Musings* : —

"'Tis the sublime of man,
Our noontide majesty, to know ourselves
Parts and proportions of one wondrous whole!
This fraternizes man."

ll. 942-945. **Where all lies foundered,** etc. Byron must face the past, and as it becomes more and more real, he seeks repose in the life of imagination here in Rome. Arnold says in *Bacchanalia :* —

"The world but feels the present's spell,
The poet feels the past as well;
Whatever men have done, might do,
Whatever thought, might think it too."

l. 963. **Mount.** The Palatine.

l. 983. **column.** A solitary column in the Forum, now thought to have been erected in honor of the Emperor Phocas, 608.

l. 987. **Titus or Trajan's.** Arch of Titus, or Pillar of Trajans. Cf. Wordsworth, *The Pillar of Trajan.*

l. 989. **apostolic statues.** A statue of St. Peter now stands on the Pillar of Trajan, and one of St. Paul on that of M. Aurelius.

l. 990. **whose ashes.** It was once thought that in the globe which the statue held were deposited the ashes of Trajan.

l. 995. **Roman globe.** The Roman Empire — *orbis veteribus notus.*

l. 998. **blood and wine.** Alexander excited by wine killed his friend Clitus at a banquet.

l. 999. **Trajan's name adore.** Cf. Dante, *Purgatory,* X. : —

"The exalted glory of the Roman prince,
Whose mighty worth mov'd Gregory
To earn his mighty conquest, Trajan the Emperor."

l. 1000. **the rock of Triumph.** Capitoline Hill.

l. 1001. **embraced.** Welcomed home.

l. 1003. **Tarpeian.** The rock from which criminals were hurled.

l. 1004. **promontory.** This was a remedy for treason as the Leucadian promontory was for hopeless love. Cf. Canto II., 362.

l. 1017. **venal voice.** Paid oratory, political corruption.

l. 1022. **Rienzi.** He led an insurrection against the nobles in 1347, and was made tribune.

l. 1026. **Numa.** The lawgiver, Numa Pompilius.

l. 1027. **Egeria.** The nymph who aided Numa in wisdom and law. Cf. Tennyson, *Palace of Art*: —

> "Or hollowing one hand against his ear
> To list a footfall, ere he saw
> The wood-nymph, stay'd the Ausonian king to hear
> Of wisdom and of law."

l. 1036. **fountain.** The grotto of Egeria, near the southern gate of Rome.

l. 1057. **purple Midnight.** Tozer says this suggests mystery and warmth of feeling.

l. 1081. **Oh Love, no habitant of earth,** etc. Cf. Coleridge, *Love*: —

> "All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
> Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
> All are but ministers of Love,
> And feed his sacred flame."

l. 1107. **Seems never near the prize.** Mr. John Morley says, "This melancholy and despondent reaction is the revolutionary course — the product of the mental and social conditions of Western Europe at the close of the eighteenth century."

ll. 1108-1116. **We wither,** etc. Cf. *Manfred*: —

> "There is an order
> Of mortals on the earth who do become
> Old in their youth, and die ere middle age,
> . . . . . .
> Some of withered or of broken hearts;
> For this last is a malady which slays
> More than are numbered in the lists of Fate,
> Taking all shapes and bearing many names."

l. 1147. **Coliseum.** The Flavian Amphitheatre, built for spectacles and gladiatorial shows.

l. 1181. **Nemesis.** This idea of retribution was the revelation of Greek tragedy under Æschylus.

ll. 1183, 1184. **the Furies . . . Orestes.** Cf. Æschylus, *Eumenides*: —

> "Witnesses of those who perish,
> Coming to exact blood forfeit,
> We appear to work completeness."

ll. 1214, 1215. **Because not altogether of such clay,** etc. Mr. John Morley says, "It is a good thing thus to overthrow the tyranny of the memory, and to cast out the body of our dead selves." Between this stanza and the next the Ms. had the following: —

> "If to forgive be heaping coals of fire —
> As God hath spoken — on the heads of foes,
> Mine should be a volcano, and rise higher
> Than, o'er the Titans crushed, Olympus rose,
> Or Athos soars, or blazing Etna glows: —
> True, they who stung were creeping things; but what
> Than serpent's teeth inflicts with deadlier throes?
> The lion may be goaded by the gnat. —
> Who seeks the slumberer's blood? The eagle? No, the bat."

ll. 1225–1230. **But I have lived,** etc. The rage of the early cantos has given place, first, to melancholy, but now to hope — that spirit of Prometheus whom earth and heaven could not convulse. Cf. Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Browning: —

> "While blossoms and the budding spray
> Inspire us in our own decay;
> Still, as we nearer draw to life's dark goal,
> Be hopeful spring the favorite of the soul."
> — *Ode to Lycoris.*

> "That which we are, we are;
> One equal temper of heroic hearts,
> Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
> To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield." — *Ulysses.*

"Never doubt clouds will break,
Never dream, though right be worsted wrong will triumph,
Hold we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake." — *La Sasias.*

Cf. *Hebrew Melodies:* —

"When coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah, whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stray,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind."

Cf. Clough, *Hope evermore and Believe.*

l. 1234. **dread power.** Byron's welcome to the influence of the spirit of the past shows that a life of action has been changed to one of reflection. Years have brought the philosophic mind, and with it calm to take the place of wild unrest. Among the marginalia in the Sumner Collection of Ossian's works (library of Harvard University), written by Byron at the age of eighteen, there is an allusion to old bard's melancholy. After underscoring the following passage in *Carthon:* "Why dost thou build the hall, son of the winged days? Thou lookest from thy towers to-day; yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes; it howls in thy empty court, and whistles thy half-worn shield," Byron adds, "This striking and beautiful sentiment is the natural dictate of that contemplative disposition, united with that melancholy, which distinguishes every great genius."

ll. 1252–1266. **I see before me,** etc. In this description of the famous statue is a splendid illustration of Ruskin's "imagination penetrative." It reveals the heart of poignant human pathos with a rapidity and breadth which is Dantesque. Ruskin, in speaking of this peculiarity in Byron, says: "That passage is noble primarily because it contains the utmost number that will come together into the space of absolutely just, wise, and kind thoughts. But it is more than noble; it is *perfect*, because the quantity it holds is not artificially or intricately concentrated, but with the serene swiftness of a smith's hammer-strokes on hot iron." — *Præterita*, chapter viii. Arnold selects ll. 1261, 1262 as illustrative of

Byron's "strong and deep sense for what is beautiful in human action and suffering," and says, "of verse of this high quality Byron has much."

l. 1266. **Dacian mother.** Dacia was noted for the warlike character of its people, and when they were captured were forced to fight in the amphitheatre. Cf. *The Deformed Transformed* : —

> "Made even the forest pay its tribute of
> Life to their amphitheatre, as well
> As Dacia men to die the eternal death
> For a sole instant's pastime, and 'Pass on
> To a new gladiator!'"

l. 1269. **Arise! ye Goths.** Byron looks upon the Goths as the messengers of Nemesis, to bring a natural retribution for Roman folly. Cf. Charles Kingsley, *The Roman and the Teuton.*

ll. 1279, 1280. **from its mass**, etc. This is no exaggeration, as the ruins have furnished material for the new buildings in Rome.

ll. 1288–1292. **But when the rising moon**, etc. "Byron wrote as easily as the hawk flies, and as clearly as the lake reflects, the exact truth in the precisely narrowest terms; nor only the exact truth, but the most central and useful one. . . . Of all things within the range of human thought he felt the facts, and discerned the natures with accurate justice." — Ruskin, *Præterita*, chapter viii.

Cf. *Manfred*, IV. : —

> "Upon such a night
> I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
> Midst the chief relics of Almighty Rome;
> The trees which grew along the broken arches
> Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
> Shone through the rents of ruin."

l. 1292. **The garland-forest**, etc. This line suggests Wordsworth's —

> "And on the mouldered walls, how bright, how gay,
> The flowers in pearly dews their bloom renewing."

or

> "See how the ivy clasps the sacred ruin,
> Fall to prevent or beautify decay."

l. 1293. **Like laurels,** etc. "Suetonius informs us that Julius Cæsar was particularly gratified by that decree of the senate which enabled him to wear a wreath of laurel on all occasions. He was anxious, not to show that he was the conqueror of the world, but to hide that he was bald." — Byron.

ll. 1297–1299. '**While stands,**' etc. Gibbon quotes this in the *Decline and Fall* as what the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims to Rome said in the early eighth century.

l. 1307. **Shrine of all saints.** The Pantheon. S. Maria ad Martyres. Mr. Aubrey de Vere in his *Legends of Saxon Saints* has reproduced for us the early days of Christianity in England, as related to Whitby, Carlisle, Canterbury, etc.

l. 1324. **There is a dungeon,** etc. In the church of S. Nicolo in Carcere at Rome, there is a cell called "Caritas Romana," which legend says was the scene of the act which Byron describes in this and the following three stanzas.

l. 1351. **The starry fable.** The Greek myth says that Hercules after he was born of Alcmene was taken by Hermes and placed at the breast of Hera while she was asleep; when she awoke she pushed him away, and the milk that was spilled produced the Milky Way.

l. 1359. **as our freed souls,** etc. Cf. Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, XLVII.:—

> "That each, who seems a separate whole,
> Should move his rounds, and fusing all
> The skirts of self again, should fall
> Remerging in the general soul,
>
> Is faith as vague as all unsweet."

l. 1360. **the mole.** The mausoleum of Hadrian. It is now the castle of St. Angelo.

l. 1363. **travelled phantasy.** Hadrian had travelled through a greater part of the Roman Empire.

l. 1369. **the dome.** St. Peter's at Rome.

l. 1370. **Diana's marvel.** The temple of Diana at Ephesus.

l. 1375. **Sophia's bright roofs.** The mosque of St. Sophia at Constantinople.

l. 1377. **usurping Moslem.** Cf. II., 749.

l. 1381. **Zion's desolation.** The destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem by Titus.

l. 1394. **See thy God,** etc. For an illustration of Byron's religious belief the student should compare Canto II., 34, 64, 65, 350, 351, 922; III., 669, 670, 1011, 1012; IV, 300–304, 841, 847, 1393, 1394. Cf. Tennyson, *Crossing the Bar:* —

> "For though from out our bourne of Time and Place
> The flood may bear me far,
> I hope to see my Pilot face to face
> When I have crost the bar."

What Emerson says in his essay, *The Over-soul*, has its illustration in Byron. "There is a difference," he says, "between one and another hour of life in their authority and subsequent effect. Our faith comes in moments; yet there is a depth in those brief moments which constrains us to ascribe more reality to them than to all other experiences."

> "Out from the heart of Nature rolled
> The burdens of the Bible old;
> The litanies of nations came,
> Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
> Up from the burning core below, —
> The canticles of love and woe,
> The hand that rounded Peter's dome,
> And groined the aisles of Christian Rome
> Wrought in a sad sincerity;
> Himself from God he could not free;
> He builded better than he knew, —
> The conscious stone to beauty grew."
>
> — EMERSON, *The Problem.*

ll. 1421, 1422. **Till, growing with its growth,** etc. Cf. *The Prisoner of Chillon*, for another effect of surroundings: —

> "My very Chains and I grew friends,
> So much a long communion tends
> To make us what we are."

ll. 1429–1431. **The fountain of sublimity.** The revelation here is fundamental in education. The element of environment, the unconscious in our growth, should be made more of. President Eliot recently said, "The immense product of the imagination in art and literature is a concrete fact with which every educated human being should be made somewhat familiar." It is for this idea that Ruskin has so nobly contended for a half century. John Stuart Blackie used to say that for the purposes of true living, a memory well stored with texts was less advantageous than an imagination decorated with heroic pictures.

ll. 1433–1435. **Laocoön's torture,** etc. Cf. *Æneid*, II., 201 fol. Lessing's *Laocoön*, presents a study of this famous group. Cf. Arnold's *Epilogue to Lessing's Laocoön:* —

> "And after we awhile had gone
> In Lessing's track, and tried to see
> What painting is, what poetry —
> Diverging to another thought
> 'Ah!' cries my friend; 'but who hath taught
> Why music and the other arts
> Oftener perform aright their parts
> Than Poetry?'"

l. 1441. **Lord of the unerring bow.** Apollo Belvidere.

l. 1445. **shaft.** According to modern critics, Apollo carries in his left hand an ægis, not a bow. After reading these splendid tributes to ancient art, the student should turn to William Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art.* He says: "Ancient art, the art of unconscious intelligence which began without a date, is all but dead. You look into your history books to see who built Westminster Abbey, who built St. Sophia at Constantinople, and they will tell you Henry III., Justinian the emperor. Did they? or rather men like you and me, who have left no names behind them, nothing but their work? Art is the expression of man's delight in what he does."

l. 1468. **But where is he,** etc. We have seen that in these last two cantos Byron frankly identifies himself with the Childe.

Since III., 495, he has spoken in his own person, as it is no longer possible to act a part, because his joy and sorrow, his interest in man and nature, have become intensified in volume and energy.

ll. 1471–1494. **He is no more**, etc. The feeling here is that of Manfred (I., 4) upon the mountain of Jungfrau. He has reached the summit of his ascent in this story, and from it he takes a last lingering glance into the abyss out of which he has emerged, and into which he must sink.

> "How beautiful is all this visible world!
> How glorious in its action and itself!
> But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we
> Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
> To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make
> A conflict of its elements."

For a contrast to the despondency of Byron, see Bryant's *Thanatopsis*: —

> "So live, that when thy summons comes to join
> The innumerable caravan, which moves
> To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
> His chamber in the silent halls of death,
> Then go not like the quarry-slave at night,
> Scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed
> By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
> Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
> About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

For a noble optimism of one whose prophet eye in an age of science caught a glory slowly gaining on the shade, see Tennyson's *The Making of Man*: —

> "Where is one that born of woman altogether can escape
> From the lower world within him, moods of tiger and of ape?
> Man as yet is being made, and ere the crowning Age of ages
> Shall not æon after æon pass and touch him into shape?"

Shelley says of Byron in *Julian and Maddalo*: —

> "Most wretched men
> Are cradled into poetry by wrong;
> They learn in suffering what they teach in song."

ll. 1495–1548. **Hark — forth from the abyss**, etc. These noble stanzas reveal how close after all was England and her welfare to the heart of Byron. The death of Princess Charlotte, May 16, 1817, on the birth of her child, had moved all English people and lovers of womanly intelligence and womanly virtue everywhere. She was the daughter of George IV., and wife of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. Cf. Milton, *An Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester:* —

> "After this, thy travail sore,
> Sweet rest seize thee evermore,
> That to give the world increase
> Shortened hast thy own life's lease!"

l. 1536. **the strange fate**, etc. "Mary died on the scaffold; Elizabeth of a broken heart; Charles V. a hermit; Louis XIV. a bankrupt in means and glory; Cromwell of anxiety; and, 'the greatest is behind,' Napoleon lives a prisoner. To these sovereigns a long but superfluous list might be added of names equally illustrious and unhappy." — Byron.

l. 1549. **Lo, Nemi.** The poet now takes his stand on the summit of the Alban Hills, from whence he gets a fine view of the sea. Nemi is the lake cradled in a crater of the mountains where it is free from the fierce gales of the coast. Byron says, "The lake of Nemi lies in a very deep bottom, so surrounded on all sides with mountains and groves that the surface of it is never ruffled with the least breath of wind, which, perhaps, together with the clearness of the water, gave it formerly the name of Diana's Looking-glass, 'speculumque Dianæ.'" Cf. Wordsworth: —

> "Full many a spot
> Of hidden beauty have I caused to espy
> Among the mountains; never one like this
> So lonesome, and so perfectly secure." — *Excursion.*

> "There sometimes doth a leaping fish
> Send through the tarn a lonely cheer,
> The crags repeat the raven's croak
> In symphony austere." — *Fidelity.*

l. 1558. **Albano's scarce divided waves.** A similar lake in the neighboring valley.

ll. 1561–1566. **'Arms and the man.'** Virgil's *Æneid*, I., "Arma virumque cano," etc.

"The whole declivity of the Alban Hill (Monte Cavo) is of unrivalled beauty, and from the convent on the highest point, which has succeeded to the temple of the Latian Jupiter, the prospect embraces all the objects alluded to in this stanza; the whole scene of the latter half of the *Æneid*, and the coast from beyond the mouth of the Tiber to the headland of Circæum and the Cape of Terracina. The site of Cicero's villa may be supposed either at the Grotta Ferrata or at the Tusculum of Prince Lucien Bonaparte. . . . From the same eminence are seen the Sabine Hills, embosomed in which lies the long valley of Rustica. There are several circumstances which tend to establish the identity of this valley with the *Ustica* of Horace." — Byron.

l. 1566. **Sabine farm.** Cf. Horace, Book II., *Ode* XII.: —

> "Simple and true I share with all
> The treasures of a kindly mind;
> And in my cottage poor and small
> The great a welcome find.
> I vex not gods, nor patron friend,
> For larger gifts, or ampler store;
> My modest Sabine farm can lend
> All that I want and more."
> — *Odes of Horace*, trans. by Sir Stephen E. de Vere.

l. 1571. **midland ocean.** The Mediterranean.

l. 1574. **Calpe's rock.** Gibraltar. Cf. II., 190.

l. 1576. **blue Symplegades.** Two islands at the entrance of the Black Sea from the Bosphorus.

l. 1585. **Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place.** Professor Nichol says: "Byron's genius could not have revelled among the daisies of Chaucer, or pastured by the banks of the Doon or the Ouse. He had a sincere, if somewhat exclusive, delight in the

storms and crags. There is no affectation in the expression of this wish."

l. 1591. **such a being.** Cf. *Manfred*, II., 2; *The Witch of the Alps*: —

> "Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow,
> Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,
> Which of itself shows immortality," etc.

Cf. Wordsworth, *Hart Leap Well*: —

> "The Being that is in the clouds and air,
> That is in the green leaves among the groves,
> Maintains a deep and reverential care
> For the unoffending creatures whom he loves."

ll. 1594–1602. **There is a pleasure,** etc. Of this stanza Mr. John Morley says: "It was this which made Byron a social force, a far greater force than Shelley either has been or can be. Men read in each page that he was one of like passions with themselves; that he had their own feet of clay, if he had other members of brass and gold and fine silver which they had none of; and that vehement sensibility — tenacious energy of imagination, a bounding swell of poetic fancy — had not obliterated, but had rather quickened, the sense of the highest kind of man of the world, which did not decay, but waxed stronger in him with years." The height of happiness to which Byron rises here is Wordsworthian. For the secret of Wordsworth's happiness as interpreted by Coleridge, cf. Coleridge, *Ode to Dejection.*

ll. 1603–1656. **Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean,** etc. With these noble stanzas, whose might and majesty can perish only with the language, the student should read Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey*, Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*, and Bryant's *Thanatopsis.*

l. 1648. **and my joy,** etc. Byron was proud of his ability as a swimmer. He once swam across the Hellespont, and again from Lido to Venice and the length of the Grand Canal. Of the latter feat he writes in a letter to Murray: "I had been in the water, by my watch, without help or rest, and never touching

ground or boat, *four hours and twenty minutes.* I am sure that I could have continued two hours longer, though I had on a pair of trousers, an accoutrement which by no means assists the performance."

l. 1656. **as I do here.** Byron has changed his position from the Alban mount to the ocean.

ll. 1657–1661. **my task is done,** etc. Arnold, in speaking of Wordsworth and Byron, says, "When the year 1900 is turned, and our nation comes to recount her poetic glories in the century which has then just ended, the first names with her will be these."

l. 1673. **sandal-shoon and scallop-shell.** The former indicated pilgrimage by land; the latter, which was worn in the hat, by sea. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV., v., 23: —

> "How should I your true love know
> From another one?
> By his cockle hat and staff,
> And his sandal shoon."

"The poem is a glorified guide-book; but it is something more, for in the person of his hero Byron creates a type which represents modern romance, modern melancholy (when the Revolutionary passions remained unsatisfied and the Revolutionary faiths were obscured), and, with these, the capacities for wide and varied pleasure proper to a time of culture, of travel, of cosmopolitan sympathies and interests." — Edward Dowden.

"The third and fourth cantos placed him on the platform of the *Dii Majores* of English verse. These cantos are separated from their predecessors, not by a stage, but by a gulf. Previous to their publication, he had only shown how far the force of rhapsody could go; now he struck with his right hand and from the shoulder. Knowledge of life and study of Nature were the mainsprings of a growth which the indirect influence of Wordsworth and the happy companionship of Shelley played their part in fostering." — John Nichol.

"The vein of meditation is richer (in the last two cantos), deeper, more dignified in utterance. The personal emotion of the

poet, saddened and elevated by his cruel experience of life, finds vent in larger harmonies and more impassioned bursts of eloquence." — J. A. Symonds.

"It is a pity that Byron was not invariably a scrupulous literary artist, that he wrote so much, and that almost everything he wrote was published. But, when all this has been said, it remains a solid and immovable truth that Byron was a great poet, and that he continues to be a great power in the literature and life of the world. Nobody who pretends to anything omits to read *Childe Harold*." — William Winter.

The story of Byron's remaining years is a short one, and full of dramatic intensity of action and passion. Shelley returned to the Continent in 1818, and in August visited Byron at Venice. The result of this was that Shelley wrote *Julian and Maddalo*, which Mr. Rossetti calls the most perfect specimen in the language of "poetical treatment of ordinary things." *Lines among the Euganean Hills* were written during the autumn while Shelley occupied Byron's villa at Este. Here again Shelley pays tribute to Byron. They were visited by Moore at La Mira, and with him went to Venice. In 1820 and 1821 Byron lived at Ravenna. *Don Juan* was then being published; and the poet was actively engaged in his historical dramas, *Marino Faliero*, *The Two Foscari*, *Sardanapalus*, and *Cain*. That celebrated parody, *Vision of Judgment*, and the bitter and absurd *Deformed Transformed* followed. He then took part with the Carbonari, of whom he was appointed chief.

For ten months Byron lived at Pisa, and the two poets led a somewhat Bohemian life. In 1822 Captain Trelawny joined the party, and Byron was visited by his greatest grief in the death of Shelley by drowning. He then left Pisa for Genoa, where he completed *Don Juan*. "Having exhausted all other sources of vitality and intoxication," says Professor Nichol, — "travel, gallantry, and verse, — it remained for the despairing poet to become a hero."

> "Through life's road so dim and dirty,
> I have dragged to three and thirty.
> What have these years left to me?
> Nothing, except thirty-three."

With these feelings, he joined the expedition to Greece. His vessel was conducted out of the harbor by convoys sent from the American fleet as a tribute to the poet. He died at Missolonghi, April 19, 1824. He was brought to England and buried in the old church at Hucknall-Torkard.

"May all the devastating force be spent,
Or all thy godlike energies lie shent?
Nay, thou art founded in the Strength Divine;
The Soul's immense eternity is thine."

—Hon. Roden Noel.

The admiration which Goethe had for Byron is revealed in the fact that Euphorion, the Spirit of Poetry in *Faust*, Part II., Act iii., is the representative of Byron. Goethe says: "I had intended, formerly, an entirely different conclusion to the *Helena*. . . . Then time brought me Byron and Missolonghi, and I let all else go." The *Dirge* is a lament on the death of Byron, and reveals the deep impression which the news of his death created in Europe. The first stanza is as follows: —

"Not alone! where'er thou bidest;
For we know thee what thou art.
Ah! if from the day thou hidest,
Still to thee will cling each heart.
Scarce we venture to lament thee,
Singing, envious of thy fate;
For in storm and sun were lent thee
Song and courage, fair and great."

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